

Humanity

AND THE

Mysterious Knight

Mack Stauffer



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AND THE
MYSTERIOUS KNIGHT

BY
MACK STAUFFER



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DEDICATED TO
MY BROTHER-IN-LAW
W. J. Terry
TO WHOM I HAVE BEEN
GREATLY INDEBTED.

INTRODUCTION

WE are now in a phase of rapid and unprecedented development. The conditions under which we live are changing with an ever increasing rapidity, and, before the end of this century, skyscrapers will rise above the cloud-line and lose themselves in the firmaments; the Fast-Express will be supplanted by the Pneumatic Tubing System, and passengers will be carried at the rate of a mile per second. Great inventions will solve our industrial problems. And mammoth syndicated farms will have for their domain one or several states.

The achievements of this century will dwarf the achievements of the nineteenth century as those of the nineteenth dwarf those of the eighteenth. One can see signs of the change everywhere, and the rush of it increases as time goes ever onward.

Everything we see is evidence of this progress of a kinetic reorganization of society beneath the traditional appearance of things. We are in marching order, and have struck stride forever on the broad road of human possibilities.

As we go onward humanity will experience no shock, no epoch-making incident, only minor disturbances in the dense populated streets, while making its gradual and well formed transition.

Insensibly we are as yet in the aurora of this new day.

The past is but the beginning of a beginning — a dream before the awakening. As we are but still the simple creatures of the present dawn we cannot now see what this new world or day will be like.

Geniuses will come, who will see us in our littleness — know us better in that distant to-morrow than we know ourselves to-day — and who will comprehend this future that now defeats and baffles our reason.

This world is but the promise of greater things. A period will come, in the unending succession of periods, when giant intellects — intellects who are as yet inconceivable in our thoughts, shall saddle this earth as one saddles a horse, and shall shout and wave their hats with glee, as they gallop out to corral the stars.

As far as our knowledge goes, no sort of creatures change themselves, and as our planet swings through space it enters new heavenly areas that has existed, maybe, before this world was an unborn satellite and still in the womb of the Sun. It is following in the wake of the trails that were swept by other worlds ten thousands of centuries ago. And as mind is the great power of the universe and what has once been thought and done remains for ever as an influence from those unknown worlds of pre-historic times — what was thought then — has been left in space to influence other passing bodies.

Our world is now possibly entering into one of these areas, or strata in space, and the impress of

the thought of that period may be involuntarily influencing our whole method of thinking.

At any rate, this aetiology is as good as any for the curious and perturbed frame of mind of the whole world to-day. Whatever the explanation, the effect exists, and it becomes necessary to meet the condition, to analyze it, and to formulate rules for its guidance and its just expression in law and procedure, and to restrain it within the bounds of reason and sense, else it may develop into a wild, crazy stampede ending in the destruction for the time being of modern society.

However the impress of this story prevails from the heterogeneous development of our commercial tendencies into the financial domination of one man, or one big, powerful syndicate, which reaches its culmination. Then, its struggle to maintain and to hold. Of such is the character of this work, and if it is bombastic, juvenilistic and crudistic, it also tries to be an admonition, finely but inoffensively conveyed.

The time of this story can be placed as far in the future as the reader's imagination will permit, but it can be applied to this day, as it has sanguine kinship to the present trend of events, and is but a glimpse of a certain period of progression, as civilization advances into the remotest days of distant time.

THE AUTHOR.

HUMANITY AND THE MYSTERIOUS KNIGHT

CHAPTER I

NEWMAN'S PESSIMISM

"It's coming — coming, as sure as fate!" exclaimed Newman. His face was ebullient and phrenic. He acted as if he were breaking out of some wild delirium. And, in madness, as if giving vent to his desperation, he tried to break the distraction. His sudden paroxysm revealed to the young Octopus, who now closed the switch that cut off their communication with the clerical departments, and kicking a lever with his patent French boot, that kept them in tact with the outside world, that some mad, moody thoughts were creating phantom devils in his aged secretary's brain.

"Nonsense, Newman, don't be a quitter." answered the young man, rising from his plushed seat and going over to his secretary who was still reclining in his chair; his eyes closed and head bent until his massive chin touched his large chest. He sat as if he had been felled by some blow and was hors de combat, and was ready to give up his ideas

and himself without a struggle. "Nonsense, Newman — don't be a quitter. Don't be a quitter," he said cheeringly, with his ungloved hand on the shoulder of the old veteran fighter.

"No use — no use. They are millions. We are but a few. How long do you think we could last? No use — no use, boy! It's coming — coming as sure as fate!" he answered gloomily.

"Mr. Newman, your pessimism and fatalistic outlook is mythical. Come out of this monomania. The zenith —"

"Yes, the zenith has been reached," he broke in with a taint of sarcasm in his voice. "The forces of nature fell before us like blades of grass before a scythe. But, there's one force that defies us still — Man! He's a thinking animal!"

With a cynical sneer in his face the young man answered:

"Men are but rounds in the ladder on which I step and climb. If animals they be, they are, nevertheless, very dumb — for I drive them!"

"It is coming —" continued Newman in his fatalistic way.

"What is coming? Tell me. This ranting and raving congeals my blood! Explain yourself. Out with it, Newman. I never saw you act this way."

"A strike! — strike, my boy. A strike that will make all other labor troubles look like a sprinkle compared to a deluge. It's coming. I feel it. I hear it. I breathe it —" he paused, his face more gloomy — "and, I know it!"

"Nonsense, Newman! A strike means a famine, stagnation and death. Stop the activity of this

mammoth corporation in any one channel, and it would make civilization in this country as barbarous as the jungles of Borneo, and the cry of the starving would become one miraged, horrifying scream. I don't agree with you. Attack the Consolidated Farm and Development Co., in any one of its vast departments and it strikes back like a boomerang with equal vengeance. Our workmen and the public at large ought to know — ”

“ Know! ” expostulated Newman. “ Do you think that mass — that mob — called humanity thinks? They are like cattle, locoed, and a stampede is inevitable. I can see our present society tossed about on the horns of mad bulls! ”

“ Your picture is dismal enough. If you hadn't partly reared me I might have cause to doubt your sanity. This sudden outburst is without warrant. ”

“ Warrant! Then you haven't heard? ”

“ I have not heard — that is, I have not heard that which would make me look at the situation with such pessimism. ”

“ You haven't heard from the South? the North? the West? At this very moment the reapers within twenty miles of this office will be, or are now silent — silent as the grave. Rain is forecast. Not a single wheel will turn in all of this industry. ”

“ And you tell me this? ” the young man answered, his face a little agitated.

“ That's the message from the Enter-State departments. I questioned every available source before I dared to tell you. Everywhere I inquired I received the same answer. However, I could have left it to the office force to tell you. Now —

I ask you to excuse my brusqueness — as this is not a time for any display of diplomatic strategy; and, for which I have no particular hunger. Understand, I might have broken the news more calmly; but, agitated as I am, I had no time to grope for words that would show a more equanimity of mind.”

The young man, Cleve Clevendor, did not answer. His mind was too perturbed. His dream had come to naught. Ten years he and Newman had pushed the C. F. & D. Co. to its now present zenith without a hitch; paying assistants large salaries — which were considered fabulous — compared to the wages paid to the laborers in the cities. They had made many enemies; they had forced the small individual farmer out of business; they had cheapened land and all agricultural products. Indeed, so cheap were these products no individual farmer cared to compete with them in the market.

They were assailed by county papers, bucolic preachers, and by the voice of men everywhere. Indignation meetings were held. Legislators made laws against them. They were referred to as the “Land Monsters, Arch-Criminals,” and the greatest “Foe” of civilized man. In a few years they had demonstrated to the world that they were not monsters, but benefactors. Yes, they had forged their gleaming rods and steel rails over conquered lands and states just the same and had followed them with huge granaries, power-houses, mills and everything necessary to production, distribution and consumption.

This great business began in the spring with

the dull tilling of the soil and ended with the musical hum of cycles and the metallic chant of cotton-pickers; doing the work in farming industry that it took millions of individuals, with the mule, horse and steam plow to do (which implements are now delegated as lost arts in the museums of antiquity and causing the establishments where these tools were manufactured to be closed, with broken windows and rooms fit only for the habitation of bats). Yes, they were not monsters — but benefactors, and the world would yet learn, he thought.

“It’s an outrage! An outrage, Newman!” exclaimed the young man, his face showing pain. “You know we have barely made two per cent. on our investment. It has been my hobby to be a benefactor to the masses. We have brought prices down so low on agricultural products that it produced much wonder and astonishment. And — when I hold the destiny of millions in my palm — they defy me. They, the people, whom I feed. Yea, it is true, they would smite the hand that feeds them — they, the millions, I employ and give work.”

“Yes, my dear boy,” replied Newman. “Look at the many millions you have driven into the congested cities to find employment, who before were living peaceable in their hamlets and villages; husbanded their industry; loved their neighbors and worshipped their God. Their daughters are now in the cities, in houses and places that for decency I will not call by their right name. Their sons in the penitentiary and are criminals — or, they themselves tramps or dying of that new and incurable disease, that the medical fraternity calls

by some unpronounceable combination of Greek and Latin; but, in plain unmitigated English, is nothing but starvation."

"Newman, you talk like a 'Muck-raker,'" answered the young man wearily.

"I suppose you have never thought of the fact that with the price of one hour's work, these people you mention, can buy back what it took three to six hours to buy before."

"Yes. And who in the hell is to furnish that one hour!" returned Newman. "True, the C. F. & D. Co. has benefited the wage workers in the city; because the Consolidated Farm & Development Co. has not thrown any of them out of employment; and the wage workers have been benefited by this great reduction of the prices of necessities, maintaining their pay for labor based on former high prices. Now, since the C. F. & D. Co. has been able to produce these necessities so cheaply it has been a great benefactor to them. But, it has played hell with the agriculturists' prospects the world over. True, in the C. F. & D.'s conquest, it has accomplished wonders. It brought the value of land down — to where you could buy it almost for a song. It also brought forth the curses of both the Landlord and Real-estate dealer. It curtailed further operations of the Real-estate dealer, and the accelerating activity of his thriving business suddenly found its decapitation in the sway of humming cycles; and the exploitation of the tenant by the landlord, terminated in the landlord's further exploitation, but left the tenant without a job or a place to lay his head, or a

master to feed him, and the landlord without contribution.

"In a word it was confiscation — robbery! The bare way to state it. The C. F. & D. robbed the real-estate dealer of the suckers he caught. It robbed the agriculturist of a market for his products; robbed the laborers of their jobs; it robbed the farmer of a means of making a living. It was confiscation — robbery!"

"Mr. Newman, your head may be level, but your talk on this is very puerile and unreasonable. Of course, where there is so much power and strength some are bound to be hurt. The incongruous are first to go. By the natural law of development, so unsuited, the C. F. & D. has only weeded out the unfit. The Landlord, Speculator and Manufacturer, what are their losses compared to the great good we have done for the masses? If their business is the old and antique way, it is nothing more than the law of the game, and it is no fault of ours if they are put out of business. It only proves their uselessness in this world and they should die! While the C. F. & D. may have driven the yaps and yokels into the cities, it has, also, been an instrument in pushing the onward march of civilization into the advancing ages of time, and it will continue to go on, for that matter, until the day of reckoning, when the clear sounding notes of the bugle shall resound in the last reverberating echo, the words, 'Well done.'"

"Bombast!" uttered Newman, with a faint critical sneer. "I have no criticism to offer," he continued, "on what you, or we, have accomplished. I will concede that a master mind saw it

all and planned it; and, I will add, this master mind did it for his own glory, as well."

The young man's face flushed. Was it the truth his secretary spoke, or was his criticism indecorous? While there had been a wonderful freedom of speech between them it had never developed into disapprobation. He had never spoken to him so uncomplimentary. However, he knew of Newman's revolutionary ideas, but this did not matter so long as there was no immediate danger of them being put into execution.

"John Ruskin said: 'Arts are never right unless their motive is right,'" Newman advanced.

"Ruskin was an old fogey," answered Clevendor. "He was an artist, a dreamer, and had his thought in the sky all the time. Ruskin said some good things — so did Solomon. We are not moulding conditions of to-day to the past. History does not repeat itself any more than does man revert back to a particle, enter again into the mould and is reborn."

The audible sounds of footsteps and the intonation of voices from the reflectorscopephone (a machine that caught the sights and sounds from the streets below), told them that many people were collecting around the office building.

"A visit this morning from the grievance committee."

"I can't see the cause of it," answered the man. "I presumed the C. F. & D. was running smoothly enough, and our only excitement in breaking the monotony of clerical routine was battling with the courts and legislators; but, on these scores we have whipped them to a finished — frazzle — as

once said a man, when he was punching his New Nationalism into the phlegmatic brains of the Opposing Bosses. Are you sure it is the Strikers' grievance committee?"

"Sure! It's the order of the day!" answered Newman.

"It was just the other day we increased our employees' wages without any demand being made by them. They are the highest salaried working men for their particular work. We have given the individual farmer employment who could not make a living in competition with us farming the old way. In the past we have been handicapped because we had more places for unskilled labor than men to fill them. Think of it, Newman!"

"True at first," answered Newman; "but not the case now. At the start of this vast empire of land, it took many thousands of unskilled mechanics, but this time has now passed. The C. F. & D. has cornered the land; harnessed the forces of nature. Where it did not rain your huge canals, running north and south like they say they do on planet Mars, made green vegetation grow where no man dared to sink his plow. With your gleaming rails and polished girders you have woven the nation into one network of cold iron. While measures of mowing cycles and clanging notes of steeled machinery make one metallic chant from the Icy North to the Sunny South. The West, with its Rockies, yet defy your conquest and is unwilling to become your captive. The East is yet to be conquered and shivers at your approach. But," said Newman, pausing after his oratorical flight, "since this foundation has been laid, there is no employ-

ment for this army of unskilled, only in sundry cases. The artisans and skilled mechanics are striking because we have let the thousands go. I understand they have a woman leader, from the city, and beautiful—some have told me—as ‘Helen of Troy.’ She’s a Joan d’Arc of the movement. Her operations, so far clandestinely, are confined to her class; but, now she stands with an army of proletarians, who are educated to their needs.

“While they are in a sense, cattle!—they are mad bulls to cause a debacle in society on which you or I will not ride unless it is on the tips of these goring animals’ bloody horns.”

“Your picture is vivid, Mr. Newman,” said the young man, unmoved. “I feel no danger. If they cause us to shut down—to stop the wheels of our industry—we will make a stench in the cities!”

“You will starve the nation!” cried Newman, with a look of horror.

“No—I’ll destroy it,” he voiced without pity in his face. “I’m determined to do my best for it. We have done the greatest good to the greatest number. If we are harangued by some she-adventuress, I’ll see the nation in the throes of starvation, before I’ll give in. We can’t destroy the land, but I’ll see to it that it will be bad for the people’s existence for a few years, anyway. We can cause a disturbance which no class wants. I defy them!” he continued, as his fighting blood surged to his face.

CHAPTER II

THE STRIKERS' COMMITTEE

AFTER the usual proceedings for visitors to gain access to young Octopus's office, the grievance committee, which consisted of three men, was ushered in. They were a bit nervous but appeared determined.

Suddroff, the spokesman, and apparent leader of the committee, was the well recognized leader of the Pitdweller forces the country over. He had given the Clouddwellers many nervous chills before.

The huge and ugly scar, on his right temple, extending almost from his ear until it hid itself under the disheveled hair that fell unkempt on his massive brow, which he used to good advantage when proclaiming his fidelity to the Pitdweller cause, was his greatest asset.

In a bold manner he started the proceedings without an introduction, seeming to shun such preliminaries. With a contemptuous sneer on his lips he stated their demands, which were: "Shorter hours, so as to restore those out of employment."

During the foregoing, Cleve sat at his desk uninterested, and heard the Striker's demands with very little sympathy.

Newman answered: "If we should grant what

you ask, it would be equivalent to us going into our pockets and handing you the money. It will mean that we must charge proportionally for our products; or, in other words, make the people in the cities pay for what you want. This means we must tax the people for the products they must have in order that you may get your demands. Now, we can make the day shorter, but if so, you must pay back for what you buy on the same increase. Of course, if the present prices were to remain the same for the necessities of life, and we were to grant this concession, you, and all the rest of the people, would receive great benefit. But, just at present the Consolidated Farm & Development Company is not proposing to run at a loss."

"This industry has barely paid a dividend on our investment," he went on. "It is only folly for us to entertain the idea of such an innovation."

"Then you refuse!" cried Suddroff, with large beads of perspiration on his forehead, which was unusual for this cool September day.

"We do. Decidedly," answered Newman. "We have tried, and —"

"What do you say about this, sonny?" asked Suddroff, speaking bluffly to Cleve, his small, black eyes gleaming cruelly.

"Mr. Newman speaks for the Company," said Cleve, meeting Suddroff's advance coolly.

"He does, eh?"

"Mr. Newman speaks for the C. F. & D. I have nothing to discuss with you. You are not even an employee of this concern, therefore, I do not consider you."

"But, I speak for *them!*" he returned fiercely.

"If so, we do not recognize *you* or *them*. We have nothing to grant that we have not given," said Cleve convincingly, turning abruptly to his desk.

Suddroff, turning to Newman: "I see we can't gain anything by talking to that young up-start. You, perhaps, can best settle this matter?"

"I meant to say, when you interposed, that we have tried, and in many instances have accomplished the purpose we have had in view. For an illustration, my dear sir, where would your present price of commodities be if the old method of farming was the only force in the agricultural life to-day?"

"Go on," said Suddroff wearily.

"I say there would be starving in the cities —"

"That's the case now," put in Suddroff.

"And *you*, of this committee, would be tramping many weary miles behind plows, for the small —"

"For the return of those good old days, every lover of liberty cries," shouted Suddroff fiercely.

"And now you obtain for only a few hours' work, and easy work at that, your necessities for many weary days to come."

"Yes. That's what this committee is here to do. It wants to give all the poor devils a chance to get work to live. What you say would be right, if every poor fellow had a job. There are millions starving!"

"The whole idea is very inconsistent. Utopianism. I will not consider your demands. I have a sense of duty to the laboring classes of the cities, whose condition, at present, is the concern of the

world, and not the class whom you are supposed to represent."

"They have received your sense of duty," voiced Suddroff in sarcasm.

"This proposition," said Newman, with a wave of his hand, "there's nothing to it. If *you* and these gentlemen with you, have the power to order a strike we can meet it. The C. F. & D. controls the world necessities, and all that you have to sell is labor. There are millions of you knocking at our doors ready to sell their labor for much less than we are now paying. We have so far discouraged them, because we want to be fair to those who have helped us make this the largest organization in all the world."

Suddroff gave a deep sigh. His companions squirmed, but maintained their reticence. Cleve looked amusingly at Newman, and suspiciously at Suddroff.

"If you carry on this strike," continued Newman, "we do not lose. Suppose we should, we can gain it back; because the loss of so much of the world's production means that a premium must be placed on what is left. Therefore, the higher the price for our commodities and the greater the demand for our machinery to run. You will not receive any sympathy from the cities. They will condemn you for making them pay higher prices. Hence more starving. We might arrange a profit-sharing plan?"

Suddroff smiled cynically. "For that we have been asking."

"The larger end of it?" asserted Newman coldly. "I merely suggested this unique scheme,

hoping that the re-incorporation of the C. F. & D. along these lines might solve, to some extent, our industrial problem."

Suddroff listened while Newman went on to explain.

"Under this arrangement the Company's stock could be increased, issued and known as the first preferred, which would at present bear 8 per cent. accumulative dividend. We will agree that when this Company earns more, enough to pay the dividend on the first preferred stock, and has taken care of depreciation and other like charges, the surplus is to be reinvested in the business and an industrial nontransferable stock will be issued to represent it. This stock to have a par value, upon which we can agree later, and the shares to be distributed among the Company's principal employees, pro rata with their salaries, as a reward for zeal and faithfulness to the Company."

"Impossible!" Suddroff uttered. "This proposition binds us to work. We don't like the profit-sharing plan. It is only a new scheme to ward off what is bound to come. We cannot accept this plan in any of its phrases. I have stated our wants and —"

"We care for no further discussion," interposed Cleve. "You preach the doctrine of Mobocracy. In your brutal way you try to bluff us into accepting this unreasonable proposition. This is my ultimatum! Leave or be thrown out."

The other two members of the committee started to go, but Suddroff, his face flushed with anger, apparently did not want to take his leave in such an

undignified manner; or, at least, until after he had paid his respects to the young Octopus.

"Young man, I'll not go until I have to some extent revenged the cause I represent. This insult can't be forgiven until I have had the physical satisfaction."

With these words he made a move to carry into execution the threat. As he advanced, Cleve pushed a small button, and instantly from the very walls sprang big, powerful guards, who grasped Suddroff and his comrades. They were ejected from the building without further ceremony, and before they had time to realize what force had ejected them.

Newman's piercing grey eyes met his. "You did right, my boy," he said. "Suddroff wishes a revolution. He wants to become a Robespierre, and he would make this country one bloody marsh. He has the deluded idea of being a benefactor to the Pit. He is the propulsion of this movement. For some cause this woman and the old man with her were not with the committee. I have heard of the woman, as it has been stated to me, that you were not responsible for the conditions, that the C. F. & D. was an improvement over the past method of farming, just as the Fast Express was over the Ox-cart and Stage Coach, as our Tubing System is over the Fast Express. The old German (the old man) shares the same view. This woman, it is claimed, was a music pupil of this old secluded teacher. This young woman came under the influence of his advanced ideas, to the extent that she gave up family and the social standing with it. Desiring not to place her family in bad repute, she

became incognito, and is called Humanity. (The name she is known in the Pit.) She received a portion of the family estate to never disclose her identity."

"Very romantic!"

"Yes. A very beautiful woman, too. No doubt very intellectual. But, the old saying?"

"Whom they'll choose or take up with, is as uncertain as this weather."

"But women have changed the maps. Rode chargers in bloody battles. Showed their ability to fight and lead equally as well as the men," continued Newman.

"Do you think this woman can gain much following from the Pit? She being incognito and perhaps the mistress of this old German, I would think, to some extent would detract from her prestige?" asked Cleve as he varied a little from the main gist of the conversation.

"Quite suggestive. Such is not this case. In fact, my boy, it is not permitted. They (she and the old German) fight the idea of free love and anything that pretends toward it. She's a kind of Hypatia. A Goddess of the 'Joan d'Arc' type. Her speeches have great weight with the Pit-dwellers. If sound or not, she to-day, more than any one else, can make a bloody revolution. Suddroff and all labor leaders have the utmost respect for her — a respect akin to reverence. The German, I am told, idealizes her, and whether it is a spiritual or intellectual love, is only with them. The question of love is debatable. Some contend there is no such thing as mental love, they argue that it is purely physical."

"Metaphysical Judge!" answered Cleve dryly. "Do you think there is any reason in this thing called platonic love?"

"You are beyond me. My mental vision can go no further than the realm of Cosmogony. I am too analytical for my thoughts to soar, they pinion in the air for a moment, and then come to the earth again like a winged bird. My imagination will not sail the Empyrean and Phantom seas. Being weighted with matter, they sink into material waves of thought. However, this, my boy, is so much bombast," he said smilingly.

"Those were beautiful thoughts," answered Cleve, beaming on his secretary.

"As a youth I was given to such gusto, very much in the same sense as a woman likes poetry," Newman continued. "But orators remind me of peacocks—all fuss, feathers and inflated ego. I once knew one of those grand eloquent performers. He understood reason and mathematics as well as the average man does Herbert Spencer. To his oratorical flights the yaps and yokels would yell themselves hoarse. Of course, in his sphere he was without any exception a Past Master, but, nevertheless, a bombastic furioso."

"Judge, you are an Iconoclast! You break the ideals of the past," Cleve said with delight.

"An image breaker? Sure. I have blasted at the Rock of Ages, at the Tables of Stone and at the Ten Commandments with much vengeance. The ghosts and phantoms of the dead and superstitious past do not cast or recast their weird appearance, nor do their apparitions come to me in the dark

hours of the night, or caper around like gyrating devils in the sacred realm of my brain. No, boy, I am ghost proof. The ghost microbes give me a wide berth. They can't exist in the embossed materialism of my enshrouded thoughts. I criticize the public men of the past with the same attitude as I do those of to-day, boldly and without fear."

"But, Judge, we have drifted from the main gist of thought. I wanted your opinion of this thing — this thing — of spiritual or platonic love. Do you believe there's anything in it?"

"A confirmed bachelor is biased. As a rule bachelors do not know what it takes to constitute love. I have never had this lover's feeling, and I would not be honest in saying there's nothing to it. Love may be intellectual or not, but it is an attracting force at the same time. This earth, for instance, as it is, a floating speck of dust in the vastless void, is attracted by the law of gravitation. Under this classification one could say that the Moon is in love with the Earth, and that the Earth is flirting with the Sun. If this is love, then love is a vibrating force, always attracting that which is in the same pitch, or in sympathy. Every person impels or creates this force somewhat on the principle of Wireless Telegraphy. It is not a credulous thing to believe that thoughts are transmitted from one brain to another. Thought is force, possessing energy, and is called love among the human family when it attracts. The force that attracts men and women and all lower or higher animals is the same force that the Earth used in capturing the Moon. It's the same force that holds

this Earth and Stars in their position — and so on in the vastless void — is nothing but energy!”

Cleve looked at his aged secretary: “You’re beyond me,” he thought.

CHAPTER III

A SUBSIDIARY COMPANY

CLEVE had great respect for Newman. He called him Judge because he had been Circuit Judge three consecutive terms, and was known as one of the ablest lawyers in the country. He had entered his father's employ as chief attorney, and as legal agent he won great renown during the strikes (the last of which is not yet settled) and especially did he gain fame in his able defense of Clevendor's business when the Courts were about to crush and destroy it.

The Corporation had been termed a "gigantic monopoly," with the right alone to restrain trade according to its own volition. Newman's defense before the Supreme Court of Clevendor, Norton & Co.'s interest was so clear and forcible there was only one course left for the Court to follow and it handed down a decision that startled the country.

"No jurisdiction," the Court had decreed. "Its power of authority was limited. The big business of the country had grown to such an extent that it was stronger than the Constitution; therefore, new laws must be enacted, the Constitution must be changed to meet the growing needs of the interests."

Cleve was a great favorite with Newman. After his return from college, at the age of twenty-one, he refused to attend the following term as he did not care to go further into the collegiate course. He had not been a good collegian, as he cared more for collegiate sports than he did for an academic training.

Clevendor, being disgusted with his son's course at college, had listened with some degree of enthusiasm to a plan he had conceived to organize a new company, or a Subsidiary, as it is known in financial circles. He had agreed to advance the necessary funds to finance this extension of their old business and also consented to Newman's idea to form a partnership with Cleve in this new undertaking.

Newman knew the law, could give legal advice and could buy a bucolic Legislature when necessary. As this new enterprise was to establish a precedent they would have to control the Congress, so Newman spent most of his time at Washington while Cleve planned and put into execution the results of his inventive mind.

Mr. Clevendor, being in his declining years, was given to moods and deep hypochondria, characterized by an exaggerated anxiety, caused, perhaps, by his ebbing vitality. He would suddenly think himself very poor and that the Pitdwellers were murdering the Clouddwellers. During these spells he would not spend, but clung like a leach to his wealth and would tell every one that he had suddenly lost all he possessed. By this subterfuge he fooled no one but himself, and whether honest or dishonest, it served as an able artifice for him to es-

cape the tortures of his conscience. While under the influence of this cloudy shift no business was ever transacted with him.

On the eve of the planned departure Clevendor had one of his spells. Cleve was anxious to be off. He could hear the West calling him while his warm blood coursed through his veins through the excitement and the increased rapidity of his heart-beats. Newman was arranging his office for his successor, when Cleve burst through the door in an excited manner. "It's all off!" he cried.

Newman turned a surprised face in his direction. "What's the matter?"

"Father's got one of those spells and refuses to advance the money."

"Go on as if nothing had happened; and, too, it will suit me better to leave to-morrow or next day. We'll hang around here until your father gets better, which you know he will," he said cheerfully. "You just go over the proposition again in the morning as if nothing had occurred," he continued by the way of parting.

Next morning Cleve found his father in better humor, but traces of the mood still showed in his speech, which wore away as Cleve began to tell enthusiastically of the feasibility of the business. He laid bare the project in minute detail, growing in fervor as his father listened. When he had finished, his father expressed himself, "I'm afraid the plan is impossible and I base my objection on the ground that the present mode of farming places the price of production so low that it would hardly pay to go in so extensively." Cleve could tell by the light in the elder man's eye that he was

proud of him and of the big idea he had conceived. For the moment he was captivated and signed the necessary papers for him to get the money to purchase land.

He and Newman made all haste to the Tubing System's depot and before the hands of their watches pointed to three o'clock they were in the West ready to begin their business, that was and is the biggest thing of its kind known to man.

In the first year of this Company's operations, extending West and South from the office, had been belted fifty miles of farms in a web of iron. The following year it had crossed a state line and was tightening the steel girders on the bosom of another state.

By Fall of the second year it had reached the Mexican border and decided to turn its course North from the main office to conquer the Northwestern states. These states were soon belted, then East, through the central portion, dodging the mountainous country, taking a southerly route to the Atlantic. Thus the great Consolidated Farm & Development was formed.

The Company was chartered to do an interstate farming business and after it began to branch out it went into other fields, Cotton Gins, Flour Mills, Manufacturing, etc. It had to secure a multiple charter in order to do an interstate business, in all of its branches.

With a paid in capital and surplus it had no stock for sale. It was a personal institution, being governed by a few stockholders. It was only the determination of a young man who had started out to solve a problem and meant to succeed.

At first land values were high. Land owners placed the value so high that it was nothing less than extortion. The Company's agents bought regardless of the price and without objection. This action made many friends. The person who owned a few square rods realized more than he could gain by an increased valuation, or by cultivating single-handed.

The purpose of being on the square, avoided legerdemain and such methods to gain an end. If a land owner refused to sell, Cleve went around him, but only after offering him nothing less than philanthropy. This person always regretted his own stubbornness as land values and farm products went down as the C. F. & D. continued to do business.

The News Bells of the country proclaimed the "glory of the enterprise" and eulogized the great philanthropist behind it.

The Labor Bells did not concur in this opinion and heralded it "as a plan to destroy the last vestige of the life of individualism; that the hope of the Nation was being consumed by the curse of commercialism; that the blood of the Commonwealth was commuted for dirty gold, and that the conservation of the free American life depends upon the soul and energy left in the people."

The people did not care. They lived only by economic determinism. The C. F. & D. had lowered the high cost of living. It was a good thing. Cleve suddenly became a great man.

This was the sentiment. But meantime the cities grew in population, and the cry of the unemployed became louder and more often. Question arose whether it was a benefit.

CHAPTER IV

THE STRIKE

THE strike was ordered, and for the first time in the history of the Company it closed down. All its machinery was silent. No call was issued to take the place of the striking Riders and Trackmen. While the other departments were loyal the Riders and Trackmen tied up the whole system as they brought in the supplies of raw material to be manufactured into the finished product, and to be used according to what its nature might justify.

While the strikers were only a handful compared to the main army of employees, they, nevertheless, controlled the most important branch of the industry.

Governor Jones placed the city under martial law. The city had a Labor Mayor, and in case of serious uprising he might be biassed to the extent that he would not handle a violent and rebellious mob.

The Governor, acting with authority, had sent troops without advising the Mayor. Acting only at the instigation of Cleve, who had informed him of the state of affairs.

"I don't like to leave you, Marion," Cleve said the morning of the day following the visit of the Suddroff committee. "I'm afraid a long Labor

war is on," he continued, looking at the marble floor and the lines of deep veining in abstraction.

"It's best for us to break up the 'house party.' Mother and I will take the guests back to the city," she answered, looking anxiously into his face from the depths of her brown eyes.

"No. Don't say it. This hotel — my home — was built especially to entertain. You have just come and I can't think of your going away so soon. The troops will be here and I think there will be a cowardly withdrawal of the strikers without injury to a single person."

They went to a window and looked over the city. "See! The Troopers. They are arriving!" he cried, as he pointed in the direction of the Tubing System Depot. A narrow but long line of men in uniform and glistening bayonets began marching. Then came the lumbering sounds of heavy vehicles, and ponderous Auto-artilleries with polished guns and decks cleared for action went through the streets. "How about it now?" he asked.

"I never — I never was afraid. I thought we would be in the way."

"Will you stay?"

"Yes. I only wanted to go when some one told me that the Mayor of the city would let the strikers throw bombs, and let them do many horrible things. I just wanted to leave this dreadful place."

"We will do the bomb throwing," he assured. "We can wipe out the whole brood of this class of citizens. No, dearie, this trouble of the C. F. & D. Co. shall not mar your visit. However, a little bloodshed might add some color in picturing

the Western strike to your friends when you go home."

"I believe you would jest in the face of death. I don't think that anything could happen in this rustic place that could startle me. I'm more interested in you," she said smiling.

"I am glad to hear it. Can't you spare me for awhile?" he asked. "I must be going to the office. Mr. Newman will think the strikers have gotten me."

Cleve found Newman vividly excited. He was walking the floor in a hurried manner and was in one of those characteristics moods.

"The Eastern curse is upon us!" he cried. "It's blighting malediction has fallen like a horrible nightmare! This dreadful imprecation of evil laughs at us from behind its hideous grinning mask of Eastern malaproposness in malevolent defiance! This sinister malversation blasphemes the word of our God and destroys the last heritage of man's individualism. Enthralled under its soothing ban, the Pitdwellers, doped by its poisonous toxin, would crucify justice and carry civilization back to barbarism!"

"Stop!" cried Cleve.

"Stop! Boy, did you say stop?" turning an ashen face to the young man.

Cleve was ashamed. "Excuse me, Mr. Newman, I'm all unnerved."

"Why, lad, of course I shall. But the old man read further into the future and could see this awful tragedy with its bloody ending."

"For my sake, don't tell any of the guests, Marion or her mother. At any cost don't tell any

one at the hotel. We must not show any alarm over this affair while in their presence."

"As you wish, but I had a call from Mr. Norton in regard to this very thing. On learning of this trouble he went to see your father and they had agreed to advance all necessary money until the crisis was over; and asked if I thought it best to arrange for the departure of Mrs. Norton, Marion and the guests. I told him there was no immediate danger, and if developments were to the contrary I would advise accordingly."

"Good," Cleve responded.

"My boy, it was your happiness I was considering. However, speaking candidly, I think it would be for the best, the guests should leave. This morning I find we are losers of a few millions."

"The war of destruction has begun?" asked Cleve turning pale. "Don't the fools know it will place the nation —"

"They are but cattle," put in Newman. "A stampede is inevitable. The masses do not reason. I once thought they did and early in life I started to work for them. I soon learned they could not be trusted. They were cowards, and easily swayed at will by demagogues. I was honest in my devotion to principles I thought constituted reformation. I had a sentimental attachment for the people and their cause. Being gifted and eloquent I incited the envy of the leaders. They accused me of not being class conscious. A lawyer, and coming from a different class (my parents were wealthy), I was snubbed on all occasions. Petty charges calculated to damage my good name were

preferred against me. Driven, at last, to desperation by the class I wished to defend, my ideals shattered, the mob howling like wild animals at my heels for my blood, I struck back and I am continuing to strike back," he said as if living those old days over in his mind again.

"This strike came when we least expected it. I would have had Marion and her friends postpone their visit. They came this morning and as the troops are here they will not witness scenes calculated to mar their pleasure."

"Just go on with this affair, boy. I'll keep the Company's head above water. The property that has been destroyed is only where protection could not be afforded, and I think by now we have everything under control. I have prepared an address —"

At this moment the voice of the Evening Bell, from its funnels, informed that Mr. Newman (Atty. for the C. F. & D. Co.), would make a brief address. From the four huge bells, Newman's words went North, South, East and West, and in the mouth of every one of them Newman's likeness was presented.

"To whom it may concern," he said. "The strike was instituted by forces outside the realm of the Company, and by people who do not understand the workings of any one of the departments. The demands were insolent. The Company could not receive them. It meant, simply in one word, confiscation. There was but one alternative, the Company would rather face a strike, have its independence and receive what moral support it

could, than submit calmly to coercion by dark lantern apostles of social impossibility. The C. F. & D. Co. wanted to be fair in the matter. It had no desire to cause bloodshed, and all that it asks is the moral support of all law abiding people. It will not try to run with outside labor. Hoping the strikers will soon see the error of their way and return to the places that are waiting for them, praying that the breach between those who harbor a grievance may be amicably adjusted." He concluded by saying, "the Company wants to go still further in cheapening the necessities of life."

"That will do them good," said Newman turning to Cleve, while vociferous applause came from the populous streets.

Following Newman's address, Suddroff appeared in the mouths of the funnels of the Daily Bell.

"Mr. Newman is the unreasonable, unsympathetic and uncivil personage of all the intellectual prostitutes who serve at the feet of our social Cormorants," he said. "His conscience is akin to marble. Instead of being an attorney of the C. F. & D. Co., he is the main power behind the throne. The acting King, Clevendor Second is but a figurehead, the offspring of Clevendor the First, and every bit as bloodthirsty as his cruel father. The Company is but a subsidiary of Clevendor, Norton & Co., the arch enemy of man, God and good-government. The strike will fail. 1st, because of not obtaining the support of the official union and the other departments. 2d, because there's an army of unemployed, ten times greater than there are places to fill.

"There is only one solution for this gigantic

monopoly, that is in the single tax theory of Government control."

No applause, except in a few alleys and by-streets where small crowds had collected to listen to the agitators.

CHAPTER V

THE HOUSE PARTY

"PAINTING your picture rather vividly?" said Cleve, as they listened to Suddroff's address.

"Lad, they have painted it worse before, and if I am not deaf, you also came in for a share of this fellow's abuse. These people can never see anything but their own selfish desires. They want their utopian dream now. What education has not done they want to create by law. They want a Heaven on earth by statutory enactment."

"Very improbable!" replied Cleve.

"Right you are, boy," Newman assented. "Reforms do not come in a day; it takes knowledge and sentiment and years of waiting to get them. You can no more legislate morality than you can the religion of Jesus Christ. Education is the power of thought. We—you and I—are doing more to create the Pitdwellers' thoughts than a dozen Suddroffs. The fellow that villifies the Clouddwellers does it to attract a mob to his standard and publicity. I hope this deluded fellow gets the notoriety."

"I see he admits failure," ventured Cleve.

"Yes," Newman responded. "The people of this country are not like those of the East. He found conditions unripe for his fiendish carnage."

"I must be going. You are coming over to spend the evening?"

"Sure. If a bachelor is welcome?" he answered. "You know he is."

As Cleve left the garage in one of his racing flying machines, he noticed the soldiers encamped around his building.

He gave the countersign by means of a flashlight, so the Troops would not take him for an enemy and destroy him with a shot from one of their aerial guns.

Cleve was an expert airman, holding records for both altitude and endurance tests, and would be a strong contestant for first honors in the next International Meet.

On reaching the hotel the management informed him of the women's excitement, and before he went to their apartments he saw signs of the chaotic condition.

He entered the costly furnished alcove that led to a more elegant apartment — all was still — he went in and waited for evidence of the girls or Mrs. Norton. He heard feminine voices in the superb and lavish drawing-room.

This parlor was provided with old unique wooden articles, elegant furniture and rugs from Persia and Damascus. It would have graced a King's palace as he had spent a Sovereign's income to equip this room and hotel in general with the best the market afforded.

He stepped across the second alcove to peer into the drawing-room, and then feeling guilty of intruding upon his guests unawares he made known his advance by clearing his throat and crying out

lustily, "I'm coming," simultaneously parting the portieres in time to see scurrying kimonos and dainty slippers, and occasionally various bits of hosiery as the girls half laughing, half crying made their exit to protection from his naughty eyes.

"Caught!" he cried as Marion emerged from behind a massive divan where she had crouched for temporary refuge.

"Yes, villain!" she answered with mingled tears and smiles. "Idiot! Why did you not let us know? We had begun to pack. We will not stay here where they let a nasty man talk about us. Since you have acted so, I know we are going. Mama is talking to Papa and we — Dog! how dare you come here?"

"You knew we are only half dressed," she said,

"Marion, I would do anything for you."

"You knew we be only half dressed," she said, acting as though mad with him.

"I'm glad I didn't. Yes. A thousand times glad. You look prettier at this moment than I have ever seen. Why, Marion, I never dreamed you were half so lovely," he answered, drawing nearer. "I believe I love you more and more every time I see you," he went on.

"You believe; you are not certain then?" she questioned.

"I *know*, if you are particular about verbs."

"That's better. Believe and know are entirely different. To believe expresses to an extent, uncertainty; while to know, expresses you are positive that a thing is true."

Then came voices from behind half closed doors,

curtains, etc. "She's trying to fool you, Cleve. She jumped behind that —"

Marion, blushing: "Cruelly enough you have forsaken me in this moment of need. Perform your womanly duties and venture forth and expel this bold intruder who has invaded our sanctuary. Come! Show your womanhood!" she cried.

Cleve was an athlete, six feet high, and weighed one hundred and ninety pounds. In wrestling and boxing match he would have been a powerful antagonist. He watched the circle of girls with an amused expression. Suddenly he became seized with fear and trembled from head to foot, although he was a Gulliver and the girls looked like Lilliputians beside him.

"On your knees!" the girls cried. "Pray, man, and beg mercy of superiors!"

With his hands clasped reverently under his chin he went down on his knees as he was told, and his eyes looking imploringly at his feminine captors as they gyrated around him Indian fashion.

Going through their burlesque and pantomimic performances they went around him the second time and retired to a corner of the room as if in secret council. Returning they removed the gag from his mouth, and Miss Nell Jackson, a pretty brunette with a dramatic voice, began to speak: "Sir, by the power invested in me and in behalf of the sisters your life can be saved only upon one condition. You must discard your coat and vest and don the kimono."

"I promise —"

"To wear the Kimono!" she emphasized.

"Yes. To wear the Kimono — Pa-jamas — Night — Nightgowns or —"

"That will do," returned she, with a majestic sweep of the hand. "Another thing you will have to do before you can gain your freedom — a very trying ordeal — you must permit yourself to be kissed by every sister of this order."

"I'd rather sacrifice my sacred right to manhood. I refuse," he answered.

"Sisters! Gag him! He refuses to obey one of the most important mandates of the order! I say gag him! His supercilious pride is unbearable."

Turning to the girls: "I hope you don't feel hurt by what this mere man refuses to do? He talks so ungentlemanly I would suggest we wash out his mouth with a little soap and water."

"A great idea, Nell. We should have thought of this before," said little Miss Delainey.

"Something more than soap and water," spoke Marion. "An antiseptic! Carbolic acid is good. It's a great disinfectant!"

"The unkindest cut of all," thought Cleve.

"Ice cream and fruit cake would be punishment enough," put in Jhonie Windsthurs, the older of the two Windsthurs sisters.

This met with cries of "Horrible!" and "How could you be so cruel, Jhonie?"

Cleve groaned and pulled helplessly at the cords that held him a captive.

"To add torture to his misery I would say a little plum pudding, too," said Gertie Windsthurs.

This brought forth more pain in Cleve's face, and viciously he tried to break the stays that bound him.

They seemed to be divided on his sentence, so a vote was taken which stood two to three for plum pudding, Marion casting the vote that sealed his fate to the awful stuff.

"Now, mere man, you have heard the decree. Which of the many punishments do you prefer? You don't refuse to wear the Kimono, but you do to kiss the young ladies. Now you must take one or more of these — soap and water, carbolic acid, ice cream, fruit cake, and worst of all, plum pudding. We will be lenient. You can make your selection."

"I will wear the Kimono. I will take a little ice cream and some fruit cake, and I will also try to munch the plum pudding," he answered meekly.

The girls looked puzzled. The Kimono, or one large enough, was the all important question. Finally Marion obtained one of her mother's. This one proved to be of equal dimensions, and when adjusted to him it was too short. It only came to his knees.

Thus robed and led to an old stately chair where he must go through the osculation. As Marion was instrumental in the victim's capture, she should have the first chance at the lips of the poor unsophisticated Cleve. When about to carry this into execution she heard Miss Delainey whisper, "I bet this is no new thing for Marion." To this she said: "Dimple, I never would have thought this of you. I have never in all my life before — unless it was my Papa."

"We believe you, Marion. We believe you, dear," came the girls in chorus.

"I can prove it by Cleve, — too," she added.

"Why, dearie — we know. But go on."

She was about to spring the trigger of decapitation when Mrs. Norton appeared and stopped the guillotine performance.

"Girls, I'm ashamed. As your chaperon I place the ban on such unladylike actions. I'll not permit this," she said.

"Saved!" cried Cleve, running to Mrs. Norton and kneeling before her.

"You have escaped us, Villain! We will get you yet," came the chorus.

Mrs. Norton told how she had been a silent spectator from behind the portieres in the second recess room, where she had come in time to hear Cleve say, "I'm coming." Many times she said she could hardly suppress her laughter, and when it seemed the joke was carried too far she decided to intercede.

"Well, ladies," explained Cleve, "the reason I didn't let you know I was coming was because of what I heard at the office. I came here as quickly as I could."

"We accept your apology," answered the girls.

"But, really, I rushed here expecting to find you excited."

"We were before you came," put in Miss Jackson. "We were declaring our intentions of leaving. After hearing what that mean man said about you and Newman in the Daily Bell to-day, we started to pack."

"You have changed your mind now? You aren't really going?" he pleaded, looking first at Mrs. Norton and then at the girls. "The trouble is practically settled. The troops afford all pro-

tection we need. This strike has failed, and you should not pay any attention to political fakirs."

"Cleve," began Mrs. Norton (she called him Cleve because he had been one of the family. His father and Mr. Norton had been associated in business, and as Cleve's mother had died when he was very small he had been pampered and petted and partially reared in the Norton family), "we will stay a few days longer. I have been talking to Mr. Norton and he told me what Newman had said."

"I am glad to hear you say this," he answered.

In a few days the clouds of war that hung so low on the industrial horizon of the C. F. & D. Co. lifted and disappeared. The Autumn grew into Fall and the inimical relations were once more adjusted.

A general amnesty was granted to the strikers, conditioned only that they return to work, and to this agreement every man complied.

CHAPTER VI

THE ACCIDENTAL MEETING

ONE evening later as the day grew into the night, Cleve was alone on the top of his office building. The roof garden of this structure served as a landing for Aerial crafts. He was tired, and had excused himself, leaving Newman to entertain, on the ground that he had some very important matter that needed attention. His real objection was that the guests would go to a play which he did not care to see; and afterwards the midnight dinner against which his stomach rebelled. They would drink the night into drunken revelry, and to the extent that sleep would be possible only after weary hours of tossing.

He had accompanied them as far as the office building with the understanding they would return for him. He watched them leave the landing in one of his twenty passenger ships and disappear in the fast gathering gloom. Newman substantiated his excuses, and Cleve was now alone save the night force that labored away at the tremendous volume of substance on which action must be had for the entire system.

In the distance he could see the outlines of the huge double tubes of the American Pneumatic Tubing System. The large tubes in the dusky

grey, looked like monstrous creatures of prey and had crawled from seclusion to devour what Aerial wanderers that happened to cross their slimy path. Within the cannonlike walls were human cartridges, and when loaded, were propelled by air pressure at a velocity that made the fast Express of yesterday appear as slow as did the stage coach of the 16th century. Many nights he had looked and longed to enter the tubes and go East on a mission of love.

It had then been several weeks since he had seen Marion and he would then feel some remorse of conscience. What would she think? He had not even talked to her over the wire. It was usually after some slight disagreement that these fitful desires came to him. He wanted her to understand; he would let her suffer a while longer. Should she turn to Greyhouse (her father's tool) to make him jealous? Once she had half way insinuated this when they had quarreled — she was going to marry the Mayor. She maintained this position to his dissatisfaction, and he told her that it must be one or the other. Either Greyhouse must cease or he would break all negotiation for the heart and hand of the Princess of the Skies.

At one time she refused to appear in the Telephone when he wanted her. Then he would think of going to the city. He had loved and played with her from childhood. He remembered their first days — the day her soft dark auburn curls fell so naturally in her young fair face. The crimson would mount her velvet cheeks as he, in mad love, would press them against his own. He would tell her of his affection and could feel the hot blood

in her rosy lips as they met his in terms of unadulterated innocence. Life was worth the living; it was ecstatic! How joyful to sit in the realm of throbbing hearts beating to the music of love!

Yes! Marion was beautiful. Her large brown eyes so soft with the raiment of love proved it. Her marvelous olive complexion was real. The crimson in her face was life itself; she could not help being the pure noble hearted girl. She was the woman to make his wife.

Her beauty had captivated him, and he was willing to be her slave as long as it did not endanger his chances in winning her. Her personality seemed increased and more than once he felt himself fast receding from his position. If he could make his stand dignified she must always respect and honor him.

She had been no little power in the shaping of big business. A factor she had been in bringing about the oligarchy of wealth, behind which was Clevendor, Norton & Company. But under present conditions this organization should have been as strong as the "rock of Gibraltar," but any throne and organized wealth is unstable and vacillating when the voice of the people becomes the law. The flurries and eddies of unsettled trade winds caused little concern. In the industrial vortex he saw danger. Thrones tottering, statutory enactments pass away and the forces of protection brought into play.

Marion had been an asset in this respect; her friendship with the law makers, and was highly respected by all the denizens of the legal fraternity,

especially with Marcus H. Greyhouse, a Presidential possibility.

In the streets below he saw worming humanity. He wondered if life brought happiness there. Perhaps in this little sphere these people were as happy as he. But am I happy? He pondered deeply and reverently without conclusion. Was it worth the fight with transcending society to maintain his business? His soul cried for something more than the busy throes of commerce. And again, if he should gain his commercial desire and lose Marion in the end! Was not every moment away from her idly spent? Was he not miserable when she was out of his sight? Why not quit, before it was too late? Quit before his head should decorate some bloody Pitdweller's pike as did the heads of Loyalists during the "French reign of terror."

He shuddered in the cool Autumn evening. A sudden aversion for the people coming over him. He saw in the Pit below his perpetual enemies and with whom he was eternally at war. With whom he could never be at peace, unless he would surrender his property to be run and managed by the Mob! If he did what would become of it all? Where would Marion go, and what would become of her? Newman, he thought, might possibly continue to manage the C. F. & D. Co. under the Government control! For the rest of the Clouddwellers he could see no source of existence. To give up the fight meant he and all his friends would sink into the Pit, and be like so many animals, fighting for means of sustenance.

No, he would fight first. He would not sell out to the Government, because in the twinkling of an

eye it might declare the money he had received in exchange void. It had the power to change legal tender at any time. Suddenly he was aroused from this abstraction by the crippled appearance of an Aerial craft. It was coming toward him and as it swayed and careened through the air it looked as if it might go crashing to the earth at any moment.

He was horrified; and he watched the distressed ship in breathless excitement as it wavered between existence and destruction. He thought of entering his own craft and going to its aid, but upon second thought this seemed like suicide itself; to make the effort might mean death to all of them, whereas the thing had a possible chance of landing safely. He pressed the button and switched on the lights. The situation made him tremble as he realized the dangerous predicament of the ship's occupants. Cleve, as much as he was concerned, could do nothing but hold his breath and await the hideous climax.

As the ship made its heroic but losing battle against the law of gravitation, an act of Providence prevented a shocking catastrophe. A sudden gust of wind lifted the craft, when it was about to fall short, and made it clear the landing by a few feet, where the disabled machine crashed with terrific force into the railings that bordered the pier.

Cleve rushed to the rescue, just as the occupants extricated themselves from the wreckage of broken steel and twisted wire. "No, we are not hurt," replied a young woman to his query; "but I am afraid the pilot has not fared so well. Poor fellow, he did his best, and if it had not been for his pres-

ence of mind, we might have been . . . it's awful. I can't bear to think of it."

With an anxious look and a trembling voice she called; no response; she peered into the wreck mass and beheld from underneath there trickled a little stream. She removed her glove and exposed her finger to the stain-like substance. "It is no more than I feared, Mr. Binger," she voiced in sympathy. "It's the pilot's blood."

"Pilot's blood!" came the startled expression of her companion.

"It is," with a look of pain in her face.

"Can I assist you?" Cleve asked as he came to a realization of what had happened. He gave orders to his office men to clear the pier.

The young lady gave a look of deep gratitude, as she removed her veil and passed it to her silent comrade. He saw her countenance; it was beautiful. The face seemed to radiate love and intelligence; it was wonderful. The contour portrayed an amicable disposition, void of selfishness; but at the moment, the charming personality was depressed. "I beg pardon," she said as she led her old associate away and addressing Cleve, "if we have trespassed upon private property? We only did so to save our lives, and you see one of our number has not fared so well."

"Not at all," he assured.

"We are thankful for the lights," she continued. "They were switched on at an opportune time. We have received so much assistance at your expense — such as having this garage damaged and bespattered with blood, that it would be indecorous for us to accept further aid."

"You are more than welcome, and I beg of you to relieve yourself of this mistaken apprehension. While you have invaded my private domain the firmament and all garages of the skies are free to Clouddwellers."

"True," she returned. "We do not wish to deceive you. We are not inhabitants of the sky. We are subjects of the Pit!"

"Indeed!" he exclaimed superciliously. "Your name is —?"

"Humanity," she put in meekly.

He started. "The name of your companion?" he asked, looking at the old man who was gazing over the city as if thinking of their trouble.

"There is nothing in common between the people of the two worlds," she replied. "I can't see why you who occupy the more preferable one should concern yourself with those who are supposed to be beneath you in every social requirement."

"A good argument," he returned.

"This old man is a gentleman in every sense of the word," she went on. "He is a man by all the attributes but one — he has no money. According to Clouddwellers he is not a man. The two worlds measure manhood by different standards — the moral with us and the monetary with you — and all the agencies in use can't change this condition."

Cleve remained silent and waited.

"You believe the moral standard produces the fool," she continued. "We know your standard of greed makes the criminal. Can fools and criminals harmonize?"

"Not exactly," he answered sarcastically.

"We of the Pit view you Clouddwellers as cor-

morants, while you of the Clouds look upon we Pitdwellers as so many animals."

"I thank you for this information," he answered in keen irony.

"However, we are greatly indebted to you, but to accept further hospitality would place us in a more compromising position. We must meet you as an enemy and we deem it expedient to refuse."

Curious enough Cleve was anxious to learn more of this young woman who so defiantly and candidly spoke her thoughts. Truly, he was face to face with they who would remove his title to his property and drive him to work like the many wage slaves. They would take his vast holdings without one word of regret or one sou of compensation. They met him on the same plane as they would a robber. They considered all men who lived by the fruits of their brain as such. He was a social cormorant, yet the very institution that made him one had saved their lives. They vehemently condemned it. Saved from death by one of his structures was no consideration. The old man sphynical; the young woman was eager to talk. With Newman's description and coupled with what his own eyes had seen, he knew he was face to face with the German professor and the woman called Humanity.

"It is many feet to the Pit below," he said. "Your mode of travel is no more. My elevators will not move unless I give the word. In the halls and stairways are stationed an army of detectives. The only exit is to jump, but this is destruction in itself. I am your enemy; you must admit that you are my captives. I control all avenues of escape. It is best to becalm yourself and it is best to be

seated. I will give you humane treatment. This I could not say would be my lot if I should meet with this kind of accident in the Pit. Yes, it is best to be calm yourself," he continued, as he led her to a magnificent divan surrounded with fragrant scented flowers. "This is my retreat," he explained, "and if I be a social cormorant I also love the æsthetical. Down below you will find art of rare value from the hands of deft masters. I have these paintings because it seems to be a fad. They are a diversion from a fit of the 'blues.' I wish I had a Grand Piano" (he saw light in her eyes. He knew he was on the right line), "which I would have a girl friend play. Do you play?" he asked abruptly.

"Yes, some," she answered with a far away dreamy look in her eyes. The old German arose and walked to the end of the landing. He leaned over the railing and peered into the abyss below. "Yes, some," she repeated as if recalling the past. "But I don't now. I haven't the time — or I mean my heart is too heavy. To play reminds me of home. I gave it up. I gave up my father and mother — my dearest friends — and my brother for —"

"For what?" he interrupted.

"For the poor souls of the Pit," she answered sorrowfully. "I gave my talents (if I had any) to them. I believe it is my duty."

"Why not stop?" he queried, noticing the pain in her face.

With a deep sympathetic reproach in her blue eyes: "You don't understand."

"I confess — I can't understand why a girl of

your nature, culture and refinement should throw herself away."

"To obdurate persons it is a mystery. To those of us who follow in His steps, it is simple and natural."

"Pardon me," he returned, "but I do not know to whom you refer. You don't mean that old German?"

"How did you know he was of that descent?" she asked.

"You said in His steps!" he replied.

"I mean Christ's; my Master, His steps," she answered; "but what of my question?"

"You are from the East, and the old man was your music teacher before you went away with him," he replied bluntly.

"How do you know this?" she demanded, her face flushed. "Tell me. How do you know this?"

"I told the truth," he maintained, doggedly. "Didn't I?"

"Yes, partly. You don't know my real name?" she asked.

"I haven't that pleasure. That's what I asked early in the conversation."

"I am supposed to be lost or dead. I am known only as Humanity."

"I rather like the name; but tell me why you took this dreadful step?"

"For the Brotherhood of Man; for Justice, Truth and Right; and for . . . God," she said, with her voice full of pathos.

"Very noble and very commendable," he agreed. "You are one in a million, little girl; yes, one in a million." He reflected a moment and looked in

the direction of her companion. "You will tell me the truth if I should ask for it? Did that old man lead you off? Did he influence you by this exotic nonsense?—this evanescent and iridescent dream!"

She was silent; then after a time she spoke: "My dear Sir, what does it matter to you if he did?"

"Matter!" he repeated. "Why — I — would —"

"You would do nothing. If you should do any injury to that old man, you would have me your everlasting enemy."

"I thought we were that now?"

"Have it as you like," she answered, with sudden coolness in her manner that startled him. "I hope, Mr. Clouddweller," she continued, "you are amply repaid by detaining us. We came here by accident, and are your guests against our will. I hope you receive much enjoyment by this incarceration."

"Oh, don't worry," he said. "It is not often I meet such a good looking woman. I can assure you this is so."

"Then it gives you pleasure, Mr. Clouddweller, to detain us?" she asked. "We are not of your class. You seemed to be concerned (pretended or not) about me as if I had committed some great wrong. Yes, I have left my father and mother; I left them because I could not live in their intellectual atmospheric home. However, they were kind; my brother treated me with great respect; but, they were ascetical and unwavering as this reinforced concrete building. I was considered a

hoyden," she went on, "and more than once threw my people into nervous tremors. They were supposed to be Christians — to be followers of that lowly and humble person, that taught the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. But, the inmates of the Pit could all be butchered tomorrow, and they would think it would be a public blessing. My people are people like you. They are Clouddwellers, Social Cormorants and are very vain and selfish — and are true descendants of the reptile class from which the bird kingdom is supposed to have ascended."

"Thank you," he said, with an amused expression.

"A while ago," she continued, "you thought I desired to go back to that class. Of course there are times when I am very sorry and think of my people and wonder if they were right after all. And, at times I suffer with deep melancholy and with a vivid imagination I can exaggerate my symptoms. A moment ago, I suffered a momentary depression. The loss of my ship, the pilot's death, and suddenly finding myself back in my old life's atmosphere did unnerve me. Perhaps I was scared," she went on, "and didn't permit my friend to speak. Poor fellow; it is I who ran away with him, and not as the story runs, as I left home some time before. He has been a great help to me; in fact, he has taught me all I know in music and in sociology. He is in incognito. He came from a very distinguished German family. His people were German Clouddwellers and his father was a life Oberburgermeister (rather long name, but it means Mayor in German) of one of the celebrated

cities. I believe it was Dusseldorf. Anyway, you can't tell that he is of German descent, as he speaks English as well, if not better than we. I appreciate what courtesy you have given us," she said, in a pleasant little laugh, and in finishing repartee: "We would be ingrates if we did not."

"Thanks."

"But the proposition is unprecedented and very humiliating if not for the manner in which it is given," she said. "In so much as you pity me, I pity you. It is all a matter of good taste. It gives you pleasure to pyramid your money. In that I can only see a narrow life, incased by high cold walls of the yellow stuff, on which you Social Cormorants gloat and feed."

"This stuff makes the line of demarcation between the two classes; and makes it possible for you to live and dwell in marble palaced homes in the skies.

"No, we are different; created different and our environments are different. You love the gay mundane life that makes you cruel and selfish. For this life I do not care. I love the Pitdwellers. Some day they will dig deep for truths, and the time will come when they will dig beneath your aerial homes and they will come tumbling down, and with them bring this inhuman and unnatural civilization," she said, still looking at him, her face wonderfully anxious and earnest. Continuing in the same way, she said, "I do not blame you, in as much as you do not care for humanity, and, of course, we do not expect you to reverse your position and become good all at once. The majority of the voting population are ignorant, and your

business is yours only by their consent, and as long as you can keep them so you are not afraid. I am trying by legitimate means to educate them to their rights — to truth and social justice.

“You don’t understand and can’t see anything beyond the glimmer of your metallic world. You see the battleground on which all must fight and you have carried out that idea to damaging effect. What you take from others shall be taken from you. To-day you have the wealth of the world behind you. All things proclaim your virtues and defend your property, which you retain only through superstition, credulity, and a childlike belief in the old order of blood and tyranny.”

“And what of it?” he asked. “I have been a silent listener, hoping by doing so you might enlighten me. All I gather is preposterous. The Pit which you seemed so concerned in is many times better off than it was fifty years ago.”

“That’s an incorrect statement,” she answered, her face flushing. “However, I have no desire to change you. Your views are of no consequence. I know your type; I know your point of view. It is hereditary, and your duty to humanity is your policy of aggrandizement. Self-hypnotized you have goaded yourself into believing you are doing the right thing. I can sympathize with you. Your horror of the Pit is the why. Your respiratory organs would suffer in that damp heavy atmosphere of the place. I made the change easily and that is the one of many reasons I caused my parent’s uneasiness when they were rearing me as a young girl should be.”

“Come,” he asked, changing the subject, “come

with me and I shall introduce you to our society. The Boat is landing, and Mr. Newman," he continued, making her acquainted with the situation, "has been entertaining some friends."

"No," she answered drawing away, "I realized this enormous gulf between us and think it would be indecorous. It would embarrass you, and remember your social caste. Admitting that it would add no new honors to your glory, I can only regard it as an imposition. Therefore, I reject the invitation, but I am astonished at your nobility of heart," she added, giving him a queer look with a mischievous smile lurking in the corners of her mouth.

"This idea is grotesque," she went on. "Consider this German friend and myself hobnobbing with our arch-enemies, the Clouddwellers. Why, it would be offering insult to injury to the people who believe in and follow us."

"It's an insult to be treated as one of my guests! Do you know who I am?" He paused for her answer.

"I do not care!" she answered unconsciously, turning her attention to the ethereal expanse which was alive with myriads of sailing crafts.

"I'm Cleve Clevendor. And there are people who would pay a king's income or who would sell their own selves to receive what I have offered you."

"This I don't deny any more than I do the theory of gravitation. Men and women will find their level, even if some hydra-headed vampires should have to sprout wings to rise out of the Pit to find their consanguinity in the Clouds. Yes.

they will sell themselves to get out of the Pit. But, there are a million of them more that will give the last drop of blood in their veins to pull you from your eyries."

The dynamic force of her words during their conversation convinced him that the denouement of something was but inevitable. She turned and regarded him in silence, as if to read his very soul. His eyes avoided her gaze.

"Your invitation is but an insidious design of which no one but a —"

"Your accusation is —" he challenged.

"You compel our incarceration!"

"It pleases me and besides I like to talk to you."

"It is not reciprocal," she answered.

"Reciprocity does not matter. Anything is fair in the game of war, and you first declared it. If you are my enemy by the forces of fate you are my captive. The more you antagonize the more you tighten the bonds of captivity."

CHAPTER VII

MARION JEALOUS OF HUMANITY

THE guests left the ship at the landing, loud and obstreperous. Their cachinnations making unpleasant cacophonies on the evening air and telling only too well their drunken condition.

"Newman has loaded them. They are noisy," said Cleve apologetically.

"And this is the crowd you wanted me to meet?" she asked with a look of disgust, and at the same time rising and placing the heavy aerial veil which hid her face behind its deep folds.

The old German was still lingering around the pier and Newman seized him just as he was making an effort to run away. With the aid of the pilot he was pushing or dragging the frightened old man to the polished marble parapet that skirted the roof-garden and the sides of the pier, to throw him into the depths below, when Humanity started to his assistance.

"They will not injure him," he tried to explain as he arose from the bench and followed her.

She did not answer or argue the question, but hurried to the aid of her fellow comrade in his precarious condition, and which indeed seemed uncertain as his captors had won the struggle and he lay balanced across the railing with his head ex-

tending towards the earth. Newman had paused in response to entreaties from the ladies when Cleve and Humanity appeared; his drunken brain partially realizing the magnitude of the crime he was about to commit, when the pilot, in obedience to Cleve's command took possession of the situation and pulled the old man back to safety.

Cleve's reprimand had somewhat sobered Newman, and as the two strange people seemed to be the guests of the young man, they immediately became the center of attraction. To have a man, and especially a woman, visit him at the garden in their absence was enshrouded with much mystery.

"I am pained beyond expression to know that one of my guests should suffer this," said Cleve gravely. "This old gentleman is a friend of this young lady with whom I sympathize and for whom I have the utmost respect. Their craft was wrecked here an hour or so ago and their pilot lost his life. Knowing this I feel that you will be more kind towards the unfortunate, if you do not suspend judgment altogether."

Marion's heart was relieved; she felt inwardly ashamed that she allowed herself to mistrust him.

"In speaking for the guests and myself," returned Newman, "I will say we are very sorry, and offer our regrets as well as our heartfelt sympathy. We feel deeply your just criticism which we respect more than we resent. Had we knowledge of this situation, and the relation these people bore to you, we would have treated them with the proper courtesy; but, when you were not supposed to receive any visitors, and finding fragments and broken parts of an airship, and blood stains on the

landing and thinking I recognize in the form of that old man a person who is said to be the most criminal of Pitdwellers, who advocates the destruction of modern society by a carnage of blood and murder — I thought you, Cleve, my boy, had suffered, and the revolution had started. However, in this supposition, I am glad to say I have been mistaken, and apologize for this colossal blunder and mistaken identity. Please introduce your new friends.”

Cleve was rebuffed and hesitated to speak.

“ Yes, Cleve, we would consider it a great pleasure to know them,” said Marion.

Mrs. Norton looked at her as if demanding silence. The other girls remained still; but they as well as the rest of the guests showed too well the effect of the stimulant they had been drinking, and this new situation or turn of affairs had to some extent restored their equilibrium.

Cleve remained calm and looked into the white face of Humanity. She had removed her veil, but refused to speak. The old German also maintained his silence.

“ If this man is not Herr Binger, who is he? ” spoke Newman.

“ If he be Herr Binger, it matters little to me. Furthermore, I have no proof to confirm that he is,” responded Cleve.

“ Anarchist! Boy, do you realize — ”

“ What does it matter? We are all Anarchists — yes, Anarchists! ”

Humanity looked at him in great surprise. A silent gloom fell over the crowd. The ebullient spirit of laughter and song died away and the situa-

tion resolved itself into what seemed to be a serious climax.

"Theoretically, we are," Newman answered.

"Gentlemen, if you will ask the individual over whom this discussion seems to be the all-absorbing topic, I am sure it will save valuable time and much waste of words," suggested Marion.

"But first call the Police," interposed Newman.

Following Newman's words Humanity, with her face convulsed and trembling like a leaf, suppressing some mental agony burning and seething for freedom, stepped between the old man and the crowd. Bellicose in every curve, in every movement of her body, in every breath that came and went in quick succession through her dilating nostrils, her breast rising and falling, her mouth tense and set, her eyes flashing and sending a queer force that awed and terrified, and portraying a person full of fight, uncognizant of danger and very exotic to the word.

"Coward! Call the Police!" she cried, addressing Newman. "You would use a trip-hammer to crush an insect! In your surmise you are quite right; this old gentleman is Herr Binger, and I — I am Humanity. Now, do your worst — you know the truth. Hold your nose and appear as if you smell something very foul — for to you the air we Pitdwellers exhale is nothing less than pollution. We are all you accuse us of being, and so far as you feel the humiliation of our association, we feel our own abasement by being here. Call the Police if you will; create a plot. Say Clevendor's life was attempted. Take us to jail — electrocute us. Then you, apostate, will get your revenge. Little

does your master know that your well fed body encases a black heart. Little does he know your associates before you became the apostle of this barbarous system — its high priest, eat its offals and preach its virtues!"

"Subterfuge!" he answered. "This is only an artifice. Your accusation is not only utterly ridiculous, but monstrously absurd; these people are my friends and your infamous charge will do me no injury."

"You are right — I see your environment and prototype."

"Cleve, take us away," asked Mrs. Norton. "I can't see the use in this conversation and I certainly do not want the girls to hear the uncouth language of this person."

"This is no place for ladies," he answered. Turning to them, he bade them go; their chaotic voices showed they were now giving vent to their feeling as they repaired to the garden.

"Be reasonable, boy; call the Police," Newman urged.

"Mr. Newman, I am astonished," he returned. "You of revolutionary ideas would condemn those who fight for them. You of all others I thought would be the first to vindicate them. No; I will not call the Police. It will only augment the situation. While I have no patience with such views or ideas I will give them fair consideration."

There was a touch of Autumn air in this early September night. The Moon had climbed high in the Heavens, radiating its whitish melancholy glow. There was a gloomy characterized condition of the

very atmosphere and firmaments — dejected, calamitous and somber.

Newman looked at Cleve. "I guess I was drunk, my boy?"

"I will take this excuse on your self admitted intoxicated condition;" turning to the girl, he said, "My private ship 'Mellifluent' is at your disposal."

"We thank you, sir —"

"We have been very heartless."

She smiled, and with a merry twinkle in her eyes, said, "I didn't know that such a word was in the vocabulary of any Clouddwellers?"

Cleve silently watched them board his craft and sail away. Then to Newman, who was leaning on the marble railing, said, "Let's go to the garden; this air makes me morbid."

"'Tis coming — coming sure as fate!" repeated Newman grimly.

"Don't predict such; we can crush them."

"You had the opportunity a moment ago, but refused!"

CHAPTER VIII

CLEVE'S JEALOUSY AROUSED

TWENTY-FOUR hours had passed since the accidental meeting of Humanity, and during the time Marion had displayed feelings toward Cleve that seemed a little strange.

"You say you don't care for this woman?" she asked, looked searchingly with her dark brown eyes into his.

"Do you think a woman like her could come between us? No, my love is of the heart and not of the head. The personal charms of this woman belong to the world and not to the woman who enjoys seclusion and refinement."

"Mama said, 'she never saw such a frightful creature—so mannish—and said such awful things.' I don't care for such low-bred people."

"She must be common, otherwise she would not have descended to the Pit. But her people may be very aristocratic?" he suggested, thinking of what she had told him. "We should try to avoid the such of last night. The vituperations of the Clouds, by this vicious female agitator, is neither good for your ears nor wholesome for your mind."

"Cleve," she said speaking softly, "those people are very distasteful to me. I have a feeling (it may be a presentiment). I fear her!"

"Nonsense. The Army and Navy will defend our lives and perpetuate our ownership of prosperity."

"Then, you'll not have to fight?"

"Me? Oh, no!" he answered, laughingly.

"I was just thinking —"

"Thinking in case of war you might be minus a husband?"

A sudden wave of crimson crossed her face. "You should not be so silly about it."

"Then you'll marry me?" he asked eagerly.

She demurred. He watched and waited, his very being tremulous. "Marion, when?" he repeated, leaning towards her as they sat in his hotel roof-garden, his strong arms encircling her waist, and madly crushing her white quivering æsthetical form.

"You are more beautiful than I have ever seen you. How dainty, so fresh, so white and so sweet. My very soul is a fire to consume you!" he cried, crushing her on his chest and planting on her amorous lips a hot burning kiss. "My darling! I could press you — press you until you would merge into my very being."

"A thousand joys! You send a million thrills through me! Press me tighter — tighter until my bones ache! You can't hurt me! This is love!" she cried.

"Yes, this is love!"

"If you should hold any other woman like you are holding me I would do something —"

"And you in another man's arms?"

"Ignoramus. You don't know a woman's nature."

His face suddenly grew dark. "How about Greyhouse?"

A shudder passed over her. "The touch of his hand chills me. I believe his veins are filled with ice water. Why do you always tease me about him?"

"Because he's my rival; there's 'many a slip betwixt the cup and the lip.'"

"You depreciate yourself," she added.

"He is handsome; and I understand he is to be the next President."

"You think so?" she asked, quickly freeing herself from his arms.

"You are eager, Marion. I see —"

"You see nothing. I was only tired of the position. You thought I —"

"Your abrupt movement. I surmised you were interested, otherwise —"

"President! Phew! Why, he hasn't brains enough; and besides, he is too closely allied with your father and my father."

"He is well supplied with grey matter; however, I understand he is to marry a woman agitator which will make him more strong with the people."

She began to stare into space, and the fire in her eyes told only too well how the smoldering coals of jealousy had been fanned into a furious flame by the suggestion. Recovering to some extent, and realizing she must not betray herself, she said in an unconcerned way, "I do not believe it."

"He is politically ambitious. He does want an heiress. A union with a leading woman of the Pit would materially garner votes and he is shrewd and awake."

She avoided his gaze.

"He is directly aspiring," he continued, "and as he has plenty of money himself, he will marry some woman that has the votes and can help him attain the goal of his ambition."

"Mr. Greyhouse is too much of a gentleman to do this. Who told you?"

"How about the woman of last night?"

"Preposterous!"

"Very reasonable; she is beautiful. The 'Joan of Pit.' Whatever she does and wherever she goes, the Pitdwellers follow and proclaim the glory thereof."

"That hideous creature! That horrid thing! Mr. Greyhouse's wife? No! Never!" she cried.

"A good woman should never marry him; because he will put everything aside that stands between his ambition. An heiress would be like placing a millstone about his neck—it would anchor his political aspiration and sink his cherished ambition to the bottom of the sea of oblivion."

No answer came from her — she stared, her face cold and hard. He went on, "However, these assumptions are indefinite. Greyhouse as a Presidential possibility is only problematical. He may never wish to marry a Pitdweller," he paused; she still made no response. "Marion, are you ill? Why don't you speak to me?" he demanded.

"You are trying to quarrel; I am growing weary of you always linking our names."

"Our engagement — our wedding — when shall —"

"Wait awhile."

"You don't care —"

"I do."

"Why wait?"

"Because —"

"Want to see if —"

"Not that —"

"Then you are obdurate — a flirt — you don't love. You are a real social tigress, ready to spring upon a second victim as soon as death or some other mysterious force has robbed you of the first one."

She uttered a cruel artificial laugh, and said, "Your character sketch is pleasing to me. You have described the personality I have tried to be, and your keen perception has avoided in time the precipice over which many blindly fall."

"Your 'words cut like a two edge sword.'"

"I returned the compliment. Jealousy is what is the matter with you. I am not 'head over heels' in love with every man I see. I have never questioned your love. Did you ever think of that? You should be more trusting, more affectionate and less suspicious."

"You may be right," he returned, "I hope you are. I'll never display my temper again."

"You are my only broad-shouldered, brown-eyed prince I have in all the world."

"These words make me happy; perhaps we had better join the guests?"

CHAPTER IX

A CRUCIAL MOMENT

NEWMAN arched his eyebrows and queried, "So you are going to get married?"

"Yes; but keep it for awhile," said Cleve. "You can spring it to-night."

"Marion?"

"Of course."

Newman studied the floor for a minute, shook his head and asked, "Soon, my boy?"

"It can't be too soon," he answered jubilantly.

"It is useless to ask if you love her? She is a lovely young woman and a Princess who will grace your castle; but are you sure of each other?"

"Our minds are the same as one; however, I understand your lack of faith."

"No 'wedding bells' for me."

"Or connubial voyages?"

"No. My right arm would go before I bind myself to a contract for life. I have seen too much of it. In my courts every docket has been full of divorce cases. Men and women who had soon tired of their contract and seeking this way to freedom."

"You have only seen one side of it and accounts for your skepticism."

"Younger I might have ventured to put my foot

on the 'soft, soft pedal;' but at that time I didn't have the 'wherewith' to equip an expedition to explore this unknown sea."

"Monetary consideration?"

"Then — yes; but to-day it is different. It is a question of being 'penny wise' rather than 'pound foolish.' And in the language of the immortalized Patrick Henry, 'I care not the course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty or give me death.'"

"Marriage has a tendency to crush freedom?"

"You are anchored to the home by the wife's apron string and squawking stork productions left on your doorstep unsolicited."

"'Destroy the home you destroy the government' is the old adage," said Cleve.

"That statement only affirms and does not define," he answered. "Governments are not of the Architect's product — they are not moulded or shaped — you can't plan and create a government or a nation as you would produce a house. Governments grow, enlarge and expand automatically and not arbitrarily as the wild soi-disant reformer would have you believe. There is some exorable law, however, bending to the whole social structure; and placable as the needs of society become more or less extensive. This is the whole intellectual thought of millions of thinking brains merged into a self-acting machine, spontaneously creating the spirit, the life and the individualism of the nation itself. To say 'destroy the home and you will destroy the Nation' is as misty as 'Indian Summer' or 'Blackberry Winter.' The home is singular and limited to commonplaceness; while

the distinct individualism — the government — is the entire combination of homes unlimited. The home, whatsoever it may be, owes its life and liberty to the nation. In the home we always have some petty revolution going on; and, my boy, it is the every-day thoughts of your friends and enemies that makes the great big Nation grow and expand. The home has nothing to do with it."

"I just thought of the statement and wondered if there was any truth in it."

"As you are about to create one?" asked Newman.

"No jesting, please."

"Is it that serious?"

"I should think so. I am about to be tied hand and foot and anchored for life. I believe that's the way you put it."

"If you love the woman that is different."

"Should we find that we did not?"

"The divorce court; it is the only way."

"I don't want such notoriety."

"Then let this puerile dream of one skirt and several rompers go to the source from which it came."

Newman continued, "I will venture your intended wife was years in making up her mind to marry you when doubtless she loved you better than she did any mortal man."

"It was prompted by the blood in her veins of her ancient mothers, who lived in the days of polyandry, when women were at the head of the family, and had as many husbands as they desired. The genealogy of the race was from the mother, for in those days no child knew its father. This was, so

far as I have knowledge, the only time in the history of the world that women have had complete freedom; and for a return of those days, without polyandria, is the dream of every woman suffragette."

"It was not until the introduction of monogamous marriage that the death knell of woman's freedom was sounded, and she has become the slave and plaything of man until this day. Marry, my boy, if you so desire; your wife will be your toy — after a time she will cease to interest you — she will become as tired of you as you are of her — you both will be disappointed and will proclaim it a hollow mockery of 'sounding brass and tinkling symbols.' The honeymoon fades — the sex charm wanes — she is less beautiful because of contact — love recovers its sight — her faults grow, and when stripped of her plumage and accessories, you behold, as if by presto, a different creature, and you, like one bewildered, will repeat that old adage, 'all that glitters is not gold.' Of course you love her now — you love her with all the ardor of a virile young man — you see her in your dreams — her face is ever before you — it makes you wild with happiness — it thrills every nerve in your body — you yearn for it — you want to fondle, caress and press your cheek against hers — you prefer death rather than lose the object of your dream. You marry — you discover you have been chasing a phantom — a fancied vision — your ethereal sweetheart of yesterday becomes your temporal wife of to-day — you are melancholy — unhappy — you find thorns instead of roses — she becomes less

attractive — she is your wife — she is property and declared yours by the bonds of contract.

“She is not the sweet, innocent mysterious creature of your wild and youthful fancy.”

Cleve was bewildered. It was evident he did not believe Newman capable of painting such a vivid picture of the sacred relation; and furthermore, he did not doubt that his secretary was sincere in what he said.

“You teach both by precept and by example?” Cleve queried.

“Do you love Marion devotedly?”

“I do.”

“Then if you wish to be happy forever, remain as sweethearts.”

“Impossible!”

“I thought so,” jeered Newman, with a look of grim contempt. “My doctrine is for an older race and a future time.”

The younger man rose as if to go.

“Stay, boy,” said Newman with fatherly feeling in his voice, “don’t take what I say too much to heart. I love you and I am a bit jealous. In this marriage I can see our happy days — our own joys of being together gone forever. Try as hard as you may it will never seem the same — our dreams — our prospects — the big business — the empire of Clevendors’ will go, for this young wife will be inimical to anything that takes your time. Wait awhile. Put it off.”

“Too late,” said Cleve, his face extremely pale.

“Have you told your father?”

“No. But I am sure he expects it.”

“What I have long expected is about to happen,”

muttered the old secretary. "I am pained to see the young genius throw his life away."

"Mr. Newman, I came to get you to make the announcement. It is to be in the nature of a surprise for the guests," said Cleve excitedly.

"Come," he continued impatiently. "I have consulted Marion and her mother, they think it would be just the thing. Marion is wondering how long the sensation will last. It will be the greatest event of the season and it will set the society of the Clouds to talking. Come, I have tarried too long. They will be waiting."

"I would rather see you —" he stopped short.

"No. I will not say it. It is impossible. I will not make the announcement!"

"Mr. Newman, do you know what you are saying?"

"Perfectly. I speak after due consideration."

"Then —" he paused — "why do you speak as you do?"

"You want the truth?"

"Yes — tell me."

"Because the woman you intend to marry does not love you!"

"What! You tell me this!" he exclaimed. "I can assure you had this news come from lips other than yours I would have made an attempt to strike. Mr. Newman, your word has been your bond, but I must have other proof before I can accept your statement. In as much as you do not favor my marriage I think you would do most anything to prevent it."

"Most assuredly. You will please excuse me. When love is blind what more can be expected? I

wave aside all objections, my boy, because I feel the subject is too delicate to be discussed, as we can only argue from a partisan standpoint."

"Have you proof or suspicions of Marion's infidelity? The cause or intention of it? I demand you to tell me — tell me as you would — as if I was a son of yours."

"I am glad to hear you speak that way. It is sensible, and I will ask if you ever entertained the idea that she loved another man?"

"No. I have not. I can't understand how she could."

"Did you know she had met, by appointment, Mr. Greyhouse, since she has been visiting you? Did you know that on the night you met Humanity she was with him at the Aerial Cafe, and they had their meals in private and consumed the whole time while we were dispensing with one of those long drawn out midnight dinners?"

"No impropriety. Mrs. Norton was along and Greyhouse, being a man of prominence, it was but natural they should seek this seclusion," he answered somewhat irritably.

"In a sense this action was excusable. The whole apartment, boy, was just as private. His identity was not in jeopardy — that was not their motive. She simply will not do. She's as crafty and sly as her father — 'a chip off of the same old block.'"

"No. I — I can't believe it. Marion is as true as steel."

"Then go by your secret passage to the roof-garden, and you will find your intended wife, perhaps, in the arms of her lover!" cried Newman.

Cleve rushed madly at him as though he intended to crush every bone in his body.

"Strike! Strike, boy, if you wish. I tell you the truth. Read," he said, handing him a crumpled piece of paper.

He could not strike or read, but mad and blind with rage he rushed to his elevator and forced it violently to the garden. Newman remained in the room sad and sorrowful.

Among the flowers, ferns, benches, fountains, trees and small shrubbery his mind became more balanced — he paused in his mad haste — fool! that he was, he thought. What if Marion loved Greyhouse! The idea of her deceiving pained him; and had a dagger been sunken deep into the most vital part of his body it would not have caused him to suffer more agony.

Take Newman's advice and postpone it — test her more — for this was a lifetime piece of business. Again he reasoned: how could she have the temerity to meet Greyhouse, when she must know he would be seeking her! Newman must be suspicious of all women. His years in the courts with the panorama of crime made him regard humanity from a criminal angle.

On a bench partly hid beneath wild running vines, his face in his hands and gazing between his fingers at the smooth marble floor in deep thought, suddenly he heard voices as if some one was approaching. He looked up the fern-bordered path and saw a couple coming in his direction, talking as if hopelessly divided. It was Marion and Greyhouse, and he decided to conceal himself be-

hind the thick foliage near the bench. The tone of each indicated they were quarreling.

"Let us be seated," said Greyhouse, "before I leave and you go to him."

"It is not proper. I have come at much risk and have, so far, stayed too long."

"I'll not detain you," he said stiffly. "I want to know if you are —"

"I am, Mr. Greyhouse. I can't marry you. Don't be persistent — my mind is fixed. I intend to marry Cleve."

A thousand joys went through every fiber of Cleve's being — every corpuscle and every blood-vessel was tossed by a tempest of emotion. He yearned for her. Greyhouse bit his lip; a dark, heavy scowl crossed his face.

"You have toyed with me," he said, speaking ugly. "I am not to be disposed of so easily. I have some money — I have some ambition; and while I have accomplished much, I still expect to rise to that summit which is the greatest honor within the gift of the people."

"You are brilliant; and I at one time loved you. I have met a stronger force, to it I have been responsive — it has awakened me."

"A sly and clever way you put it."

"You doubt my sincerity?"

"Not exactly," he answered. "A thing grows on that on which it feeds. It is wealth, power and control you desire."

"Mr. Greyhouse, I am through, and I have nothing more to say to you. I risked my honor by seeing you at the Cafe, and for which mother has censured me. To-night, should Cleve demand an ex-

planation, it would be difficult to satisfy. If you love me, as you say, leave me, and please don't compromise my good name."

"Your intended knows we are to meet here to-night," he answered bitterly. "Mr. Newman has the note you wrote saying you would keep the appointment. I sent it to him no later than an hour ago. It was my purpose to make you appear in a compromised position at the Cafe; and, if your fiance has not heard of that meeting and this one, it is not my fault, as I have kept Mr. Newman fully advised. Now I shall go; good-bye," he said, forcing an ironical laugh. "Shall I go?"

"No! You shall go with me to Cleve and explain," she said, grasping the lapel of his coat.

"No. I guess not. I am not ready to be a target for any of those improved guns. I have now accomplished my purpose. I will let you suffer the same as you have punished me." And he walked down the path to the landing, where his ship was waiting.

Cleve heard Marion utter a low moan, and saw her swoon to the floor. He parted the tangled vines and rushed to her assistance — with the firm belief that she loved him, and Newman's opinion was erroneous after all.

CHAPTER X

CLEVE'S FIDELITY

CLEVE was now satisfied—he had seen and heard for himself—he vowed if the whole world be false, Marion was true and never again would he allow his confidence to be shaken.

He gathered her in his arms from where she had swooned and seized a 'phone on the back of the bench and summoned the Medical Corps from the Clevendor's Hospital. Complying with instructions from the Physicians, Marion was removed to her room.

Cleve and Newman were very busy trying to pacify the consternation of the guests during the examination and diagnosis. The Head Physician, with all the persuasive power of his generous nature, assured them that Marion's condition was not serious and no occasion for alarm. The diagnosis was, as he had first predicted, and that she had suddenly expended too much nerve force, and as the body manufactured the necessary amount of human electrical substance, she would be her normal self.

After stimulants had been administered, Marion opened her eyes; but was still delirious. She seemed to recognize Cleve, and said in a half coherent way: "You don't believe me untrue? I am not! I swear it!" She closed her eyes and ap-

peared to gasp for breath: "I see many people!" she cried, holding his hand. "The bands are playing—the crowds are shouting—I am about to present the cup to you in honor of some great achievement; but—" she stopped, a great nervousness enveloped her body: "I see a bold creature—she has broken through the patrol—she has taken you by the hand—she is talking to you—you smile at her—you forget me," she stopped speaking and fell back in the bed exhausted.

When she revived it was the same hysterical scene: "I see a Court Room—I see that same woman—she leads a red-headed man—they seem to be excited—they leave the room—I see my father and Mr. Greyhouse fall—I remember seeing this woman once before—don't marry her, Cleve—I am true—I love you—you should not doubt my sincerity." She sank again into unconsciousness.

"Have you been quarreling?" asked Mrs. Norton, her face troubled and worried. The girls crowded around and demanded an explanation. "No. Ladies, my conscience is clear. Do you think I would cause her all of this? No. It was not me; it was Greyhouse!" he answered vehemently.

"Greyhouse!" they voiced.

"Yes—here to-night. I heard them fussing. She wanted him to explain something. He refused, and I picked her up in this awful condition."

"The dog!" said Mrs. Norton.

"She is innocent," defended Cleve.

"I shall not forget this act of kindness," returned Mrs. Norton.

"Or the rest of us, either," voiced the guests.

"This explains," put in the Doctor, who had remained with the nurse, "the expenditure of her nervous supply."

"But the scenes she describes?" asked Mrs. Norton.

"Hysteria is what some Doctors would call it," he answered; "but I am of the opinion she has just had a glimpse of the future. You see, when the objective faculties are not working or have responded to sleep, the subconscious mind is awake. While in this condition she could only receive those mental impressions. The objective mind must be dormant and the subconscious faculties must be conscious before she could produce those scenes so clearly and so vividly. She will awake in a few minutes and doubtless will not be able to tell what she has seen."

He continued: "I have often heard of such remarkable cases, but it has never been my lot to attend one. This young lady has wonderful psychic powers; a power that is said to be more prominent in women than in men; however, this is purely speculative, and as it happens beyond the border of concrete things we have more fiction than truth. This case is Occult in nature; it is beyond the power of medicine, and I can only deduct my knowledge from hastily drawn conclusions and not from any earnest thought of the subject."

"Is her case serious?" asked Mrs. Norton, still very anxious.

"There is no immediate danger," he responded, to the great delight of all, except possibly Newman, who, if affected, had not let it be known by

any outward expression. He had taken a stand unfamiliar to the guests, and it would be for his own good to maintain silence. Cleve looked at him, but he purposely avoided the encounter, and as Marion showed signs of regaining consciousness he left the room. The Doctor ordered all retire, save Cleve and Mrs. Norton.

As the nurse was removing the iced towel from her face, she opened her eyes in a startled and bewildered way.

Mrs. Norton, anxious to relieve her mind, said: "My child, you have not been dreaming. You have fainted, and it is all over."

"Oh, mother! it sounds good to hear your voice," said Marion; "I was beginning to think something had happened to me — finding myself in bed with Doctor and nurse around." Cleve was in the background, but now came forward to offer his regret for this affair. She recognized him and turned and buried her face in the pillow, sobbing. "My boy," assured the Doctor, as he, Mrs. Norton and nurse were withdrawing from the room, "you can do her more good than all the medicine in the world."

"It grieves me to hear you suffer this way," he said.

"You believe me to be a horrid — I can't blame you. It's best to leave me. You can never forgive this seeming breach of trust!"

"Marion, please don't — please don't — you hurt me. I forgive all — I forgive, for there's nothing to forgive. I still know you are the prettiest, the best and the dearest little girl in all the wide, wide world."

She lay still — the beautiful form was motionless — the sobs ceased and not a sound came from the prostrate figure before him. Presently she moved — turned her face to him — her eyes yet dimmed with tears — her cheeks burning with fever — a faint smile hovered about the corners of her mouth, and asked with a tremulous voice: “You don’t believe me untrue?”

“To doubt you would be to doubt life itself.”

“You don’t believe me untrue?” she continued.

“You are innocent — you have proved yourself — you have been sorely tried — you have been weighed in the balance — you have taken the initiative in this matter and have done well. I am thankful — I am satisfied — and if there is anything unsaid, that will help lift this loathsome cloud that has been harassing and hanging over your plastic mind, consider that I have said them; and with all the fervor of a Celtic wooer, and with the earnest desire to remove the hideous monster that is responsible for this nervous prostration.”

“I have had nervous prostration?” she asked.

“A light attack and all because of Greyhouse.”

“I’ll not see him again! I hate him!” she cried.

“Will you promise me one thing?”

“Yes. Everything,” she answered.

“Please try and go to sleep.”

“I promise,” and without a response she closed her eyes and he tucked the cover round about her and left the room.

CHAPTER XI

THE STRANGE VISITOR

CLEVE entered his office the next morning troubled and perplexed — his mind in a turmoil — his thoughts racing pro and con — his nerves jumped and jerked — any sudden sound or noise almost precipitated him into distraction. He gave his orders in such an irritable way that his assistants soon discovered something unusual had crossed his path.

He mapped an abbreviated program for the day, but he was so uncertain of himself that he had Newman go over it with him in detail. The humble laborer knew when he was in his office — knew he was ready for results — and knew when he pushed the lever that sent millions of men to work and billions of tons of iron to moving.

Indeed, he enjoyed the deference — the esteem of his men, and old Cyclops (the mighty Titan of the skies) who caused the roaring behind the clouds and made the lightning flash and the thunder cease at will, which awed the ancient Greeks, — would have turned green with envy.

Now he had conquered — he was not satisfied — like unto Alexander he looked about for other worlds to conquer. He stopped with an abruptness in the midst of his work. He had captured the

natural world, he thought, and Marion had promised to be his wife. What more could he ask?

He pondered over her dream and her vision — this woman called Humanity, who was to play an important part in their future life? The thought maddened him. The idea of this woman — Christian — believer of dreams of the dark past — follower of the mad man called Christ (a very unreasonable and most improbable creature). — A begotten son of God, who was supposed to come again and reform the world in one common brotherhood: to take his property — his inventions — his improvements — the product of his own brain and make it the general possession of the common herd. He sneered, “preposterous.” He recognized no God — he saw no justice — no wisdom — nothing but devastation and ruin.

“Who could worship an unjust God?” he asked himself, as his thoughtful contempt found expression in words. “Who could have any respect for those Temples and Churches that taught the doctrine of the ‘dead and superstitious past?’ ‘Whose High Priest hovers like owls on the limbs of tradition,’ and as Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, ‘Hooting the same old hoots of centuries.’”

While he attributed little merit to dreams or visions, this delirium of Marion’s seemed to haunt him. He could not understand — he would go to Newman. His secretary could decipher most any illusion, or at least, could shed some light on the cause or production of supernatural condition.

The hour was near ten and during the morning he had not heard from Marion. He wondered if it would be a digression to call for her, but de-

cided it would be best to talk to Mrs. Norton, which he did, and was informed that while Marion was resting reasonably well it was deemed wise not to get up.

The outer bell rang, and the hall boy, without ceremony, ushered into his astonished presence none other than this strange and mysterious Humanity.

Cleve extended his hand, saying, "I am glad to see you again. I thought from the experience of the night of your accident you would not venture here again."

A deep red mounted her cheeks — a buoyant smile, joyous with life, laughter and song — would have obtained an audience in all kinds of opposition.

"I am pleased beyond question — surprised to an extent — and half mad I had not called before. Had I known this," she added, extending her dainty gloved hand, tossing her pretty head, she bantered, "I almost forget — we are enemies, you know?"

"I like them," he said; "they make me realize I am living."

"I create life, then? Some accuse me of destroying it."

"An unjust accusation —"

"Your henchmen complimented me."

"I'll discharge them," he assured.

"No. Let them earn their money; their accusations, true or not, keep me in the 'Limelight.' I would prefer them saying something mean about me, rather than nothing at all."

"You were late in your appointment, the night of the accident?" he questioned, changing the subject.

"Yes," she agreed. Now there was a tinge of sarcasm in her words. "Other causes, too, of which you are familiar, were very important in our detention. Our acquaintance dates from them, and that evening I discovered, as I have thought, the industry of the world to-day is dominated by the spirit of the undeveloped savage. Beneath the thin veil of education I saw the groping barbarian, his bloody club, and the man animal of some ancient yesterday.

"You," she went on sardonically, "were that man; you were that groping barbarian, because you pretended to do right, but failed in your purpose. Your bloody club is your industry which you used on your fellow man. You are a man animal because you detained my friend and myself until we missed our appointment, which I can excuse, as it was but a revealed spirit of the dark and bloody age."

"My dear madam, be seated. These kind compliments have fatigued you. I must confess your depiction of me is beyond the present day character delineators. I am really astonished at your remarkable knowledge."

With a faint smile about her lips she took the proffered chair with such ease and grace that her freedom put him at no little discomfiture. She went on amused, "Young fellow, I am afraid you are working too hard of late."

Her question astonished him. She was another creature, not the one he met on his roof-garden, he thought.

"You were thinking of marrying," she continued. "Foolishness. Forget it. That bit of breath and

clay, a wife? Impossible! You want an heir; but the House of Clevendor will not stand."

"Woman, who are you?" he asked. "Prophetess — Sorceress — Bearer of Witchcraft or what?"

"I am neither. I am only one of the millions of vibrating egos with an altruistic and vivacious nature. I can see you barbarians of the skies fight with savage desperation to retain your ancient heritage. (The mills of the Gods grind slowly and surely to your inevitable demolition.) Your employed defenders imported from the dark corners of the globe cannot save your institutions — thanks to wisdom and justice. You inflated ignoramus cannot keep civilization within the narrow confines of jungled walls; but, my dear sir, 'truth is mightier than the sword,' and —"

"If you mean to lecture me I prefer to attend one at some other time," he interrupted.

"I would be honored," she said, languishing her vehement looks and softening her words. "I — I came to tell you I was going away. I wanted to thank you for the way you treated us the night of the accident."

"Not at all," he assured.

"I wanted to make an honest statement —"

"I will listen to what you say."

"We tried to make a general strike, but found you too strongly entrenched behind your parapet that all the agitators in the world could do you no harm. Suddroff, Binger and myself came here to tie up your industry. We thought we had been successful when we saw the men walk out; but, as there were thousands of unemployed ready to take their places they refused to remain loyal and

see the product of their own folly appropriated by others. The contest was so brief it was hardly any contest at all, and now you are still unhurt and the C. F. & D. continues merrily on."

"I am not surprised at your frank statement. If all people were as good as you, I don't believe we would need any law—we would be as brothers and sisters," he paused a moment, then continued, "Trade unions are a good thing as long as they stay in the social stage, but when they go beyond it they are out of their jurisdiction. They become a class Autocracy when they try to run the Manufacturers' business. Trades-people are poor people—they have nothing to sell but their labor. The Manufacturer is the principal buyer of it. The whole proposition assumes a farcical phase when the product (Labor) tries to dictate to the buyer (Manufacturer). When it comes to a crucial test the Manufacturer can say to the Unions, 'Work for me at my terms or suffer the consequences.' And if it comes to that it does not take a philosopher to foretell the result."

"You are right. Trades-unions are imperfect; they are found wanting," she admitted.

"If I have to ask the union-people if I can run my business, I will close it down; and who is to say I shall not do as I wish with my property?"

"When it comes to this I think it is time for the Trades-Union-People to own that business," she answered. "There is only one of two ways, either the Manufacturer must own his business or the Trades-Union-People, through the Government, must own it."

"You are about right," he said, slowly. "You

are choosing the proper course. If it is right for the Manufacturer to own his business, it is right to let him operate it as he sees fit; and, if the Trades-Union-People have a right, through the Government, to dictate to the Manufacturer, then they have a right to own. And, if they have a right to meddle and try to regulate, they may as well own. If I can't have my own way, the Trades-Union-People can take the whole thing and go to . . ." he paused, throwing up his hands. "If the principle is wrong on a large scale, it's wrong on a small one. Wrong is not right and right is not wrong, every day in the week and every week in the year."

"You display much knowledge on this subject," she said.

"You thought we Clouddwellers were a bit inflated, didn't you?"

"Not exactly, but only inclined. You can make yourself believe any course is right if you will disregard your conscience."

"Yes, I agree with you."

"It's just a mere matter of sentiment. When the time for you to relinquish your hold upon this world comes you will gladly do so. In fact, your business will not be a source of pleasure, and you will give it up willingly; however, this depends upon how soon you get your eyes opened."

"I will never suffer my business to be governed by Mobocracy—the spirit of the mob. I am opposed to the Initiative, Referendum and Recall, and therefore, I will not, if I can help it, let it rage like a mad bull through the Government. This institution will never be managed by a lot of ras-

callions! Who would be riding into power on the riff-raff, tag-rag and canaille spirit. I can see these gaffers, bacon-chawers and the scum of creation grinning their loutish brutish scorn. I can hear their loud guffaws, and smell the odor of cinder-wenches, as these muckworms worm their way from their dung-hills. Born within the sty-pen this swinish multitude, drunken with new liberties, would drag through the mire this glorious civilization and pull it back upon the dirt heap. Horrors! I can see Suddroff's beggarly looking face mocking me as he pulls these levers."

He reflected for a moment, then continued, "No. Human nature to-day is only a few steps from the savage stage, as you have said; but, while you see me one savage, I see millions in the Pit. I agree that the world to-day is dominated by the passions of the jungle. Even the women of to-day, their wants and desires are not very far above their sisters of an ancient yesterday. Your dream of a Heaven on earth is very noble; but human nature will have to be changed. I would favor your Utopia, if all the people were as good as you appear to be."

"It has been my wish to make them so," she said, bowing profusely. "My hopes have been centered on you for the first one. You are hopeless. and from now on I shall use force where persuasion has failed. I am bound for the Metropolis; there to concentrate our forces for the final overthrow of you Clouddwellers; then, if we are successful at the next election, your operations will be a matter of so many days — that is, if you are obstinate and show fight."

"That I'll do — do, if I have to take to the field in the defense of my property," he returned, emphatically.

"You are aware of the danger of this step? You are informed of the millions of Pitdwellers, who welcome your death? You know all of this?"

"I may be marked by your class in the East, which I presume is the case?"

"Yes, and it does not take a very bright person to see by your and your father's removal these vast holdings would become escheat — there would be no heir — consequently, they would revert to the government and become the property of the people. The Pitdwellers are not Anarchists, but they are Anarchists enough to remove two persons, if by their removal it becomes necessary. I saw this state of affairs long ago, and spent much wealth in building a great cosmopolitan palace in Murd's row, to avoid this very thing."

He shivered at the name of Murd. That name always made the Clouddwellers tremble in horror and dread. Murd (himself) had been and was a leader of a mysterious secret organization, organized originally for promoting all that was good for society, but was now operated extensively for the purpose of intimidation and radical propagandism. It was a Pitdwellers' organization — criminal in nature — and bound by an oath that swore by the Murds.

"You live and dwell in that place?" he asked, dumbfounded.

"Yes," she answered, not abashed, "I am the right hand bower. Murd as king, and Suddroff second in authority. A loathsome trio?"

“Horrors! Murd and murder are synonymous!” he cried. “And you?—Impossible! “Yes, she must be smudged,” he decided, “the smudge of that slimy impetiginous Pit was upon her. She was a repulsive, acrimonious thing. My dear Madam, I am very busy, I must say good day.”

“What if I don’t go?” she returned.

“As a lady, I hope you will. If not, then I’ll not deal with you as such,” he declared.

“My dear sir, I can’t feel as if I have been insulted. Your words can’t hurt my feelings any more than if a dog should growl at my approach. I only take your command to go — not in the sense of an insult — but as an earnest request from a soul that is weary and wants rest. Good-bye, Mr. Clevendor; remember your friend, Humanity of Murd’s row, Humanity of the Pit, is your friend.”

CHAPTER XII

THE ARRIVAL OF LORD SUMMERSOUTH

“THAT woman!” Cleve muttered, as Humanity left the room, “there’s something about her that makes me admire her, even though she be very radical.” Her oddity and strange ideas would preclude the thought of her as a suitable friend. Being wholly out of harmony and unreconcilable to such a thought he regarded it with much repugnance; however, if she had had the same degree, standard or ratio of feeling — if their minds had been of the same human pitch — tuned to life — then they could have walked with ease in the same sphere without her sending cold uncongenial chills for a pastime up and down his spinal column.

There might have been something commensurable, he thought; but to characterize the element of harmony of congenial natures must be one common thought — no visible oasis in the desert separating the opposing factions; still, contrary to an expression from himself, she had persisted in wanting to be his friend.

In her blue eyes he saw something akin to danger; but somehow they impressed him. He thought, to possess them must mean to live in a new land — to breathe a different atmosphere — to talk in another tongue — to meet strange people;

but, yea, verily, it meant the giving up of Marion — he could not and would not. No. He must not think of it — he must not see this woman, called Humanity, again — he, perhaps, had overstepped his latitude the night of the accident, when he, more from idle curiosity than any serious intent, had detained her.

Now he regretted his action of that night; because, after thoroughly digesting the matter he had come to the conclusion, notwithstanding the old German's silence and Humanity's pretended detention against their will, that the visit was a pre-arranged affair. It was a sly trick of Humanity's intelligence.

In their conversation she admitted their operations had been nothing short of failure — the men refused to maintain the strike — they were becoming desperate — also, she had expressed surprise when she found him so accessible. He began to think.

She was going back East, and for the time he would be rid of her. He thought of the message the day previous requesting he and Newman come to the Metropolis. What did it mean? Did it have any relation to this woman's talk? Was his father and Norton fearful of some kind of social eruption? He realized there was something coming, and it would. He was beginning to agree with Newman — "It's coming — coming sure as fate!"

Marion having sufficiently recovered to travel, the guests prepared to take their leave. Cleve decided as soon as he could arrange he would follow them. The idea of Marion being away with Grey-

house near to press his suit was distasteful to him; however, he knew she didn't love that Politician.

And more than once during these thoughts he thought of giving up his business as these wishes continued to harass him—quit and be with her always was the strong arguments he had to meet up and down; but he finally determined to fight it out and not be a quitter as he had accused Newman.

Soon after Marion's convalescence the pink of health again predominated her cheeks—the day of departure had arrived—Cleve stood in the door of her boudoir to say good-bye. As he stood there he could see the dainty Misses Windsthurs, with their blonde faces and sunny smiles, and the mischievous Miss Delainey. They were talking rapidly and moving hurriedly to and fro from the recess rooms and alcoves that joined their apartments to the parlor.

Miss Delainey was directing the porters and maids in their work with the luggage, and for some cause the movement of trunks seemed to be an object of no small importance, as all hands were busy shoving the conglomerated mess to the transfer. They were moved with much expenditure of muscle as though weighted with lead, and they and their movements could be readily likened unto the antics of inmates of some insane asylum.

The situation was soon explained by Miss Jackson who appeared on the scene with a strange, stately individual whose every move and expression stamped him, unmistakably, a gentleman of foreign birth. Judging from the tone of conversation, Cleve surmised that he had arrived unan-

nounced, and finding the girls on the verge of leaving, evidenced, by his expression, his disappointment because he had not come sooner.

Miss Delainey was displeased. The inopportune arrival had, for the time, stopped the movement of equipage. Trunks, valises, traveling-bags, etc., had been ruthlessly thrown and indiscriminately piled in one congealed mass. Miss Jackson, the Windsthurs sisters and the tall stranger were engaged in an animated conversation and were in the way of the movement of the baggage. Everything was at a standstill and Miss Delainey growing impatient was visibly annoyed. Her arms akimbo and sleeves turned above her dimpled elbows, she gave orders in a way that the most dictatorial sea captain would have envied. Cleve heard her shout, "Here there, Earl, break away, grab holt, make yourself useful as well as ornamental."

The gentleman addressed, bowed somewhat awkwardly, while the black eyes of Nell's flashed. The Windsthurs sisters tried to keep a serious and dignified composure, but their assumed tranquillity was dispelled when faint smiles and smothered "te-he's" came from their direction. Miss Delainey poised, her arms resting on her hips, her head in an authoritative and peremptory degree convinced she was born to command, and had she ascended a throne of a Gynecocratic Government, she would have ruled in absolute despotism.

"You think I am the maid, the servant," she continued. "I will show you 'Who's who' around here! I'll put you all in irons! Now, move on!"

"By Jove, you're a devilish charming little

angel . . . er, I might say cherub, don't 'er know. But I haven't the pleasure of — ”

“ I beg pardon, Mr. Summersouth,” said Miss Jackson. “ I am sure you think we Americans are very forgetful. This is Miss Delainey, Lord Summersouth.”

The Englishman acknowledged the introduction very politely.

“ You are dashing, very different in ways and respects, too numerous to mention, from our English ladies.”

Cleve could see and hear without being detected, and from the situation he concluded this new man must be a titled European.

“ Earl, present company ‘ is always accepted,’ and you forget your mother was an American,” he heard Miss Delainey say.

“ You question the sincerity of that statement? ”

“ Oh, no. We believe, we believe because you said it. Don't we, girls? ”

The girls affirmed in chorus Miss Delainey's statement.

“ You're devilish funny, ‘ don't 'er know.’ You freeze — you burn — you thrill and sweep by storm. How ridiculously stupid we Englishmen must appear to you vivacious Americans? ”

“ Oh, Earl, quit your kidding, you are half American yourself. You're a brick. Come now, grab holt and growl. We must rush if we get to hear Maytine Carry sing to-night,” was Dimple Delainey's reply.

The Lord addressing Nell: “ Do you intend going, too? ”

“ Yes; but you can go also.”

"Really, by Jove, I can't accept. I have important matter to discuss with Mr. Clevendor. I shall follow soon." Cleve wondered what was the nature of his business.

"Then, you won't go?" she pouted, appearing displeased.

"Honestly. I prefer to accompany you. Business before pleasure, don't 'er know."

She growing mad: "Anyway, we — or I, will be glad to see you at your earliest."

At this juncture the door of Marion's apartment opened. Mrs. Norton appeared and apologized to Cleve for keeping him waiting. He entered the room and found Marion fresh and the picture of health. The rest and medical attention had wrought wonders — she was gloved and the maid was almost through packing her trunk. He told them of the new arrival and the "time" the girls were having with him, and added in response to a query, "I understood his name to be Lord Summersouth."

"Jackie's friend?" put in Marion.

"Yes, Lord Summersouth," said Mrs. Norton. "I knew his mother, and, Marion, I am sure you have heard me speak of Gertrude Jefferson."

"Quite often. You told me she was very pretty and accomplished."

"She is the mother of this young man. He is the descendant of an old aristocratic American family and is of noble English birth as well. His mother was the 'raging beauty' of two continents in her day, and I want to meet him. We must insist that he visit us while in the States."

"Jackie may object," suggested Marion.

"She ought to feel proud and be thankful for us to entertain him. The Jackson family is having a hard time keeping up appearances here of late. I understand they have met with some reverses."

"I presume the Englishman is not aware of this?" put in Cleve.

"No. Mr. Norton told me last night."

"Poor Nell," cried Marion, "the blow, the humiliation will kill her. What will she do? To the Pit. Horrors! What will become of her? Poor girl!"

"Marry the Earl. That will save her," consoled Cleve.

"If she has no money? Will it be a bargain?" asked Mrs. Norton.

"If money is what he's after, he's a scoundrel."

"Cleve!" exclaimed Marion.

"Yes. And more, too. She could teach voice, give music lessons, go on the stage, or anything in preference to selling herself like that."

"She would then be working; almost a shop girl. Think of it. We could not associate with her."

"That's true," Cleve reflected.

"It's simply too bad for Jackie; she's such a sweet girl," said Mrs. Norton. "Don't say a word about it, daughter."

They met the Englishman, and Marion, making herself agreeable, said, "We welcome you back to the home of your mother. Our parents were friends and we shall expect you to accompany us to town and be our guest while in this country."

Mrs. Norton added, "I feel, Lord Summersouth,

as if I had first claim, and if you don't make our home your home — I shall be much disappointed.”

“I shall. And I will be delighted to do so, for, I am sure my mother's friends will be her son's friends. I would return with you, and the invitation is hard to refuse, but, I left there this morning, having arrived from England yesterday in the interest of the International Aviation Meet. I met representatives of the Flyers' Club last night, but, owing to the absence of Mr. Clevendor, we didn't come to any understanding. We are anxious to make the next Meet the biggest event of the coming year, and, I am sure America, as well as England, will do her part.”

“You are mighty sly, Mr. Summersouth; how about Nell?” asked Marion, mischievously. “'Fess up, now. Is this Aviation business the only thing you have come to see about? When is it going to happen?”

The young Earl looked abashed, and his face became erubescant. “You American girls have a clever way of putting things. Your allusion is a bit too deep for me. Miss Jackson and I are friends, if you refer to her.”

“You must excuse our manner of address,” returned Marion, “as by birth you are ultra-American. Please don't think we Western girls are all hoydens.”

“You are breezy, dashing and the most splendid specimens of womankind the world over. I will not do myself justice or think I have honored the memory of my beloved mother, until I have taken one of you across the seas to my castle, as my wife.”

"Every inch an Earl," cried Marion.

"The true Anglo-Saxon-American spirit," corrected Cleve. "Here's my hand, old man! We welcome to our shores a gentleman of your stamp and breeding."

"Mr. Clevendor, the more I see of you, the more I admire you. I am glad the commercial interests of this country are destined to fall into your hands, and I might add they could not fall into safer or more deserving hands."

"I thank you, sir. I will do my duty."

"You will," continued the Englishman. "You can save the world from the dreaded — Pit."

"I expect to try, sir," answered Cleve, with a shudder. "But, friend Summersouth, permit me to say, with we Americans, it is not good taste to speak of that place in polite society. It has such a loathsome sound; however, I speak as a friend, and knowing on certain occasions . . ."

"By Jove, old man, I appreciate this bit of information, and believe me, I accept it."

"We shall expect you?" asked Marion, as they were about to depart.

"Yes, if —"

"That the only hindrance? If she agrees?"

"Well — yes. I'll —"

"We will look for you," entreated Mrs. Norton as they left.

CHAPTER XIII

THE TRIP TO THE METROPOLIS

THE girls waved a farewell salute as they entered their private cartridge at the Pneumatic Tubing System's station. They expressed their regrets for leaving and assured they had "had the time of their lives." Each was very loquacious in their endeavor to persuade the men to hurry to the city, thereby giving them a chance to reciprocate in hospitality.

Small flurries of snow fell. The biting November winds told the season had come when little could be accomplished; and, too, this was the time of the year when Cleve sought his hibernation in the metropolis.

The day after the guests' hegira, having discussed everything pertaining to the coming Meet, they arranged to make their exodus.

The Earl represented the combined English Aerial Clubs and was a promoter of International Meets. He had quite a record himself as an Aviator and no doubt would be one of the entries at the next Meet. He was honest and Cleve knew if the event was left to his advice it would be clean in every respect. No doctoring of ships, storage batteries, etc. No impairing in any way that would disable one entry to the advantage of another.

When they were alone the Englishman introduced the subject and presented a letter of recommendation from Mr. Grey, President of the Flyers' Club of the Metropolis. He stated the proposition in a businesslike way, pointing out the different features, cost of financing, etc. He said, "There were several bids from different Nations, and as cost was quite an item, the one that made the most lavish outlay and promised the largest bonus would be the one considered."

As Cleve was the wealthiest member of the club and his father's combine governed all the Manufactures of Aerial Crafts, his views and help toward financing was earnestly solicited. Surely, as they were to be more directly benefited they were the logical ones to handle the undertaking.

The matter was settled and they, together with Newman, left for the city, leaving the C. F. & D. satisfactorily with able assistants. The policy of the Company was so clearly defined that even the smallest salaried employee knew when there was a hitch in any one of its many departments.

Each employee was a tooth, without independent thought or action, in a great self-acting machine. They were a myriad automatic cogs of flesh and blood, not irrespective to the imperial mandates of a great business wheel, and slaved, and lived, and died in the course of the grind.

"You will be a great man, if you are not already," said the Earl, as they leaned over the railing of the Aerial Craft, looking at the country below. Newman was in the State-room engaged with some detail matter. The Englishman continued, "This is a beautiful craft — its balance —

its equilibrium — its propelling power. Marvelous! How fast are we going?"

"Aero-speedometer will tell," Cleve answered, raising his voice above the swish of the wind off of the scythes. These air escutcheons were cutting through the atmospheric waves like the buzz of millions of bumble-bees and leaving mad, swirling choppy clefts in space behind.

"At this rate we will reach our destination very soon," said the Englishman, glancing nervously at the wind armors as the air rolled off leaving an apparent blueness in the ship's wake. "Before dusk," assented Cleve.

"By Jove, how do you keep your wind-shields from burning? The friction from the air — how do you keep them cool enough to meet this resistance? We have had trouble with this condition."

"An automatic cooling process just invented," he answered. The Earl looked dejected. This was his first information of such a cooling system. Cleve went on, "I do not enter the contest with these shields."

"We would be forced to bar you if you did."

"I am sure that would happen."

"How much does the Tubing System pay?" asked the Englishman, as his eyes caught sight of the huge snake-like pipes that seemed to be creeping stealthy like on the ground and at intervals would spring suddenly up after some buzzing ship for its afternoon meal.

"Profits have been tremendous," said Cleve. "The up-keep expense after being equipped is small and is almost a shame to charge a cent a mile for

service. The earnings are enormous; we can reduce to a half cent, and still make a reasonable profit; this we will do if it becomes necessary, in order to quiet the people."

"I understand. Your father had foresight to know when to unload. He sold his railroads to the government, below cost, and with such generosity. When the people were shouting they had made the mighty commercial Emperor bow, he quietly put in this Tubing System and now the Government roads are idle and decaying in rust and neglect."

"In this particular instance it has been such a blow to the idea of Government ownership that it has not hardly recovered," put in Cleve, as he pulled up the collar of his overcoat and advised the Englishman to do the same as the radiators were not able to compete with the velocity the ship maintained. Cleve continuing, "As there is no law to prevent a corporation from competing with the Government we have taken over the transportation of the mails. The old-fashioned Railroad was too slow and we put in a bid, and of course the people were eager to patronize the quicker way. Whatever the Government has demanded of us we have granted, and have beat it at its own game. We still have another trump card up our sleeve, and when the time comes it will be played."

"You are wonderfully ahead of we English. The Pit have almost whipped us."

"Yes; the Pit 'put one over you,' to speak in a slang phrase."

"In that you may be right; but, suppose the Government demands, which it will in time, the Tubing System?"

“Then the trump card. Should it demand the System, we will pretend to fight, but of course it will whip us; that is, unless we wish to bring on a great Civil War. I can assure you we wish to avoid that just at this time. The card we will play is yet our secret, as you are in sympathy with our cause, I don't mind saying the safety of the whole thing depends upon Aerial navigation. We can develop until we can surpass the Tubing; but, this we will not do until we have fought the Government through all the courts, thereby delay many years in our favor. We have all the secrets and patents known to the art. Our chief interest as yet, is land, which is our natural inheritance, and so far we are having no trouble with it, because we lower the cost of necessities from time to time until there is no demand by the Government for this kind of property.”

“But the Pit contends that all forms of property is robbery.”

“Yes, and when it comes to the giving up of our lands — our last heritage — we will fight because there is no alternative,” he answered, looking serious. “We have our schools educating what few people we can depend on; but prefer the lower classes for our defenders and soldiery. We keep up class hatred as much as possible, and give the best of them social equality. To be a Clouddweller is what every mother son of them wants. The Pit has nothing to promise; we offer them everything; consequently, they look to us for their Heaven — Social Equality. It's the dream of almost every Pitdweller to be some day in life a Clouddweller. It takes millions to hold what we have, but we make

the Pit pay for it in the long run, and occasionally give concessions."

"You are very pushy, I must say, we English could never have thought out all of this."

"The concentration of wealth in your country is not or has not been as rapid. You must own or control the four avenues of wealth — the land, the mine, the forest and the sea."

"To be sure," replied the Englishman, in very grave thought.

CHAPTER XIV

THE MYSTERIOUS MUSIC AT HOTEL MARION

THE Airship slowed down its terrific speed and lessened its dangerous velocity as towering mountains of steel and reinforced concrete buildings loomed up in their course. The Aerial Telescope showed that they were nearing the Metropolis.

The November sun was setting in the distant horizon or some place near the C. F. & D. Red, streaky rays shot from this ball, high into the western sky, and was now being shut gradually from view by dense clouds of vapor stratum through which the ship had passed.

The big city, with its many skyscrapers appearing like huge cliffs, rose towering, grand and awe-inspiring, was now like mountains and dangerous boulders before them. Below was a mass of hills and ravines—deep cuts, here and there, which came to a sudden and unceremonious ending as some large stately concrete blocked their course.

“Your city,” cried the Earl, looking intently below, forward and then above as the pilot steered dexterously around a towering wall of stone and steel that shot so high, even from their position, that it made the eye weary and head ache to follow it to its apex in the firmaments, “we have nothing that will compare with this in the old world.”

"This is the result of the American commercial spirit which has of late discovered it is cheaper to go up with its buildings than to conquer the territory surrounding. The last two or three years this spirit has dominated, and in reality, they are our castles of protection. They are our fortifications from behind which the Pitdwellers, with all their wild rampage of blood and murder, will never be able to get any of we Clouddwellers."

The young Lord was intensely interested and replied, "I am sure these chateaus are all very well, but suppose a bomb should be dropped from some Airship — then, what?"

"Each and all main structures are protected by fleets of War," he answered, "and we are safe. That building over there," pointing to it, "over a million souls live and dwell in it. Behind its walls you will find Churches, Theaters, Fashionable Clubs and every amusement known. You will find beautiful Parks, Ball teams, Tennis Courts and any and all things that would add to the enjoyment to the fullest extent. This piece of architecture cost over a billion, and is owned by our syndicate. Is named Temple Marion in honor of Marion Norton."

"One of the wonders of the New World," replied the Earl, "but, my dear friend, you still have the Pit below."

"No danger from that source," assured Cleve. "I understand you are thinking of the damage the Pit might do. Why, there is not a gun known that can put a ball through the layers of armor at the base of these buildings."

"It is almost inconceivable," said the Englishman, bewildered; "it's absurd to think of the size

of these structures. Their circumference, and extending so high, makes me look with a sense of reverence. It is with obedience to some Deity far above earth—I bow to some sovereign who has left monuments behind to be preserved in the memory of future generations.”

“Grand Central, the secluded resort for Fashionable Flyers, is second in size and bulk,” Cleve continued. “Hotel Marion, where we stop tonight, has the highest altitude and her rotunda cost a half billion dollars. The Clevendor-Norton interests own one hundred of these structures and some of the inmates who live in these buildings have never touched the earth.”

“I have heard of Hotel Marion before, and have always wanted to see it, now I am jolly glad I shall have the pleasure. But, Mr. Clevendor, I am still fearful, I think your father and Mr. Norton have not figured on this one thing. Suppose the Pit-dwellers should become possessor of Aerial Men of War and shoot down instead of up. Where are your portcullis when it comes to the big battles of the clouds?”

“Our fortifications can be explained in this way, if the Pit should ever own these crafts it will never shoot down, because it would be equivalent to murdering their own kin. No; it, in all of its blood-thirsty vengeance, will never tumble falling walls on their own friends and relations. The future battles of mankind will be fought within the confines of these steel walls—in those corridors, hallways and escalators the future historian will write of deeds of bravery, valor and heroic achievements, and all for the good of society and civilization

above the clouds. They will write of the storming of Temple and Hotel Marion by Aerial Men of War as the present historian describes the taking of Manilla, the battle of the Plains or the deadly combat of Bunker Hill."

He extended his conversation, the Englishman silent and very still. "'Tis certain we are now defensive rather than aggressive, we are not so prone to encroachment on new fields. Every successful application of industry on any object is met with cries of 'Exploitation.' We can hold what we have for a few years, then we will have to defy the world."

"Create a war and force the Pitdwellers to fight," suggested the Earl, breaking his taciturn mannerism.

"Fight, they would never do. They are not Patriots, or have qualities that constitutes love for their country. They are deluded followers and Martyrs for a dreaded Pit illusion."

They passed through the eddies and criss-crosses of air currents over architectural wonders of the lower Metropolis. This section contained more and larger skyscrapers, at one time, than any other locality in the world. The ship grazed the roofs of the structures in the vicinity, then upward towards Hotel Marion, and landed on the marble pier. The aureate shade illuminated auriferously the twilight gloom, and Cleve exclaimed, "Home at last."

"And, by Jove, we both are glad," returned Summersouth, as his eyes caught the metallic glimmer of silver floors and golden caryatides columns in the world-famed lobby ahead. As they ap-

proached the register he became more dazed at the splendor. The very air he breathed seemed to be composed of precious metal.

Women passed them, as they were imbibing the magnificent place, covered in diamonds, and to the young Lord's refined taste it was all a monstrosity.

"I am no connoisseur," he spoke with some boldness; "I have never in fashionable centers of Continental Europe, seen such an exhibition or parade. At no English Court or Coronation has such ostentation, gewgaw and strained effect been equalled."

"These people whom you see are either Million or Billionaires, consequently it is the natural daily occurrence," confessed Cleve.

At this juncture Newman excused himself. He was to go to pay his respects to Colonel Clevendor. The old gentleman still lived in the house Cleve was born in. It had been a sumptuous erection, but was now very dilapidated. Cleve was more fastidious, besides his room at his father's place, which was kept by an old family servant, he had his suite at the Hotel. Newman held the proxy vote of the Clevendor interests to be cast in the Directors' meeting of the C. & N. Co., which was to be held in the wine room of the Hotel on the following morning.

"You are my guest," Cleve said to Summersouth. "I will arrange for you. I would have you visit our home, but it would be too lonesome, as father would not be a suitable entertainer, and neither of you would understand the other."

"How about the Nortons?"

"That's so; but we can fix that," he assured.

Porters bowed the way and fell over each other to do homage to the distinguished guests. While powerful meteoric rays shot up and among the spangled draperies and hangings of the cone canopy. Color eclipsed color in one mad chromatic run of brilliancy. Transcendent after-rays flitted momentarily and furtively, like wild beautiful things afraid to venture in the stronger and swifter current. Fountains of onyx marble—deep with semi-pellucid veining in the glistening quartz and agate, and the chalcedony shining like eternal snow—created infant, shimmering, iridescent rainbows, as the soft, wet, dewy sprays of the crystal water fell like vapor in the silvery basin. The Aurora Borealis and panoramic furore of flashlights continued on and on, in one mad blend of perpetual harmony.

They seated themselves, surrounded by white and yellow chrysanthemums, near the fountain to watch the scene. The illumination began with colors strong and then evanescent with the ever-accented yellow; then, when the final flash of the lone opposing color crossed the battleground from the empyrean maze came a mirage of orange that flooded and left all and everything of a golden tint and dye; then, as if by magic the forces would clash again and be wafted on the wings of gentle breeze and lost from view in the glimmer of the haze.

“You are at a loss to know the purpose of this?”

“I would like to understand,” returned the Earl.

“This battle is twofold; it serves as a drawing-card, and emphasizes the power of gold.”

“By Jove, I see.”

Suddenly, to their amazement, from that vast impervious mystery above, as if from the clouds, came the sounds of music — so sweet were the strains that it seemed as if the entire celestial band was playing — the opulent guests stopped as if dazed, looked and listened. Louder and louder came the deep pulse of an Organ whose melody cast a spell over its auditors and made them feel as if they could see that Eternal City of peace and love.

The aristocratic air lifted for the moment, but as the last echo of the throbbing instrument died away a halo of gold again permeated like a mantel in every nook and corner of the spacious auditorium.

“My! What music! Who is it that makes it?” demanded the Englishman, almost fiercely.

Cleve was dumbfounded. “I don’t know. The last time I was here the Organist was a man. The Organ you have heard is the most expensive one in the world.”

His companion was not satisfied, and in a tone half solicitous, “You must tell me. I must see the Organist — this place is enchanted — it’s a golden night’s dream.”

“I do not know. I can’t tell. Such as this does not interest me.”

“It is no small affair,” returned Summersouth. “I think I have heard this score before, as it brings the sights and scenes of Sunny Naples back to me. It was the evening of a glorious day, four years ago next June; it was the last day of the Meet — I had won a fortune — My! I will never forget her,” he muttered, as if his thoughts were far away.

They were still sitting, lazy-like, on the golden bench that bordered the fountain. "It was a woman, then," Cleve observed.

Cleve was now inquisitive. He had thought English people were not so sentimental, rather phlegmatic. This amorous outburst had to some extent changed his notion.

"She. She was a super-woman. She knew the games — she could gamble — she won a fortune every day of the Meet and gave it away the next. She possessed some psychic knowledge. Her emoluments were for those in need."

"Would one gamble that made music like we heard?" Cleve asked, as the speaker paused.

"She made wagers to obtain money for the poor. This, Mr. Clevendor, may not interest you — I may be taking your time — I may be asking too much," he said, somewhat stiffly, and a little dismayed that he had betrayed his emotions.

"No. Mr. Summersouth, I would be pleased to hear more of this woman," Cleve insisted.

He made an effort at humor: "I want it understood that Miss Jackson —"

"Certainly," put in Cleve, "I know how you feel."

"To begin. It was the evening of a beautiful Mediterranean sunset. The breeze from the bay thrilled and made the living of life a joy. After dinner I had escaped my friends to go for a solitary stroll; on every hand the flowers and shrubbery of the garden seemed to greet me. The Sicilian sky was imbued in a gloaming maize — the sun disappeared behind some crags — the red ball of fire faded like a wandering meteor — the warm day

cooled — the stars began to peep, and it was then that I felt like giving up my occupation.

“To me, Sunny Naples looked so grand — so beautiful, I thought if I should stay another day I would never leave that ‘lovely Kingdom.’ Of course, the delightful Summer — the inspiring situation — my mood, may have conspired to make this girl as beautiful as she appeared to me. I had passed, or was about to pass, one of those old mediæval fountains, when on a bench I discovered this woman; her face was resting in her hands — her long, white, graceful arms extended in V-shape and supported her chin — her tapering fingers buried themselves in the dark auburn disheveled curls that fell in clusters over her face. My! but she was pretty, sweet and demure — she was dressed in white — and the marble of the fountain and banks of flowers around her made a pleasing background.

“I stood several moments drinking the nectar of the picture she presented — she was not aware of my approach — she was in solitude — she was in deep thought. There before me was the woman who had stirred the soul of Naples — this daring American woman — this plunger — this gambler — this enchantress — this woman with a marble heart who won hearts as easily as she cast them aside — this creature who had caused many a lovesick youth to drown his affection in the waters of the deep blue bay.

“She had captivated me as she had all Naples, and while I had not been introduced to her it was not my fault, and now, as the opportunity had so joyously and romantically presented itself, I did

not intend to let it go by unnoticed. I hardly knew how to address her and thought I had made a big mistake when I said, 'I beg your pardon, but —'

"She rose from the bending position, sat upright, and looked at me from those dark blue eyes in a languorous way, biding her time as though trying to collect her wits. Finally, she extended her hand, and made room for me on the bench, saying, 'This is Lord Summersouth, is it not?'

"'Yes,' I stammered, and immediately began to feel the power she possessed. Whether it was from my imagination or not I felt that I was not her equal intellectually."

"My! an extraordinary woman," said Cleve.

"Yes," he answered.

"Your look implies that you still know of her."

"No. I have not seen her since that night. She left Naples as she came — a stranger."

Cleve was quiet; he rather liked to listen to the Englishman's romance.

"For several moments we did not speak," he continued, "as we sat there studying each other. I grew numb and very chilly, and then by some subtle spiritual phenomenon she released her force over me; and I became flesh and blood again. And in her voice that sounded like music, she said, 'I am glad to meet you. I have heard of you before. You have been the means by which I have raised money to feed the poor of this city.' She paused in mockery: 'Lord Summersouth, you are a gentleman according to your standard. I am a student with views not in keeping with people who believe nobility to be the special bequest of Providence. Your title prohibits us from being amicable,

whether we wished to be so or not. Now, since you have overstrained that nice line of social observance, I shouldn't be so exact in my language.'

"'But — Miss' I started to explain.

"'Miss Incognito,' she supplied.

"'But why are you as you are?' I asked her."

"Naturally this question baffled you," put in Cleve.

"She laughed in my face as I asked her," he returned. "'You are in a foreign country, among strangers. If anything should happen to you, where are your friends to aid you?'

"'Lord Summersouth, did you ever stop to consider that we do things because it pleases us to do them,' was her direct answer. 'Your inquiry reveals to me that you still have on your "blind bridle." I have no fear of strangers. I know them as well as I shall ever know you. The moment you came near me I felt your thought atmosphere, and no thought harmony. In this way I select my road of destiny. Perhaps, I am speaking too high,' she went on smiling, 'remember, you have violated all laws of propriety, and deserve a haughty and an indifferent reception.'

"'A moment please,' I said. 'You looked so enchanting — so charming —'

"'A mission of curiosity. My dear Lord,' she forced an assumed sigh.

"'I meant no harm —'

"'Had I an escort. Then what? Oh! you Mr. Englishman!'

"'I wanted an introduction before you went away —'

“‘And really thought that wish would be fulfilled,’ she replied with some sarcasm.

“Then, as if by some caprice of misfortune a messenger came and informed her that she was requested to render a musical score for the people, including the poorest element, who had come to hear her. She had given a number of recitals during her stay, and at each performance her audience had grown larger and larger. She had played her way into the hearts and souls of many thousands. The masses were denied the privilege of the spacious conservatory, but showed their appreciation by hearty clapping of their hands where they had congregated on the lawn outside.

“This invitation was sufficient and, perhaps, served as an able excuse for her departure. I realized her true nature when she permitted me to accompany her to the hotel. I felt, as we walked through the garden, as if I were a King, and I would have gladly given my kingdom to have been her companion in this garden forever.”

“I would have liked to have met this woman, too,” remarked Cleve.

“I have never seen her equal,” speaking, as if living the whole incident over again in his mind.

“I hope you shall see her again.”

“Yes, thank you,” returned Summersouth. “The score we just heard sounds exactly as the one she played that memorable night. Yea! I would remember it to my dying day. I tried to find it every place. The music publishing houses knew nothing of it.”

“You failed to obtain the title, then?”

“Yes. It was the last number, and then she

rose hastily, her face imbued with some divine feeling, her cheeks with some tears on them; she smiled, bade me good-night, and before I could utter a word said, 'Don't ask me the name of this number.'

"She vanished; the audience sat like statues of marble for several minutes; then, one by one, we arose and left the chamber. Something seemed to lay heavily on our hearts. When I came out I expected to see the cities' poor. I saw only the usual crowd. She had preceded me and had bidden them adieu. This is and was the last I ever saw of her, and finishes my story. I must thank you for your undivided attention."

"I was entertained, I assure you," said Cleve; "now let us prepare for dinner."

"As you wish, Mr. Clevendor."

"I have instructed Valets in placing our trunks, and as we go to our apartments I will inform the Clerk you are my guest."

They arose from the yellow plush of the golden bench and walked over to the office bar of solid gold, where a pale slender Clerk presided. Cleve turned the diamond studded register and picked up a mother of pearl pen and made two hasty silver scrawls on the orange-colored leaf. His eyes scanned the page, and his brow contracted, and his face showed signs of displeasure. Marcus H. Greyhouse and Friend stood out before his astonished vision as if the name had been underscored with precious stones. "Lord Summersouth will occupy my guest chamber," he said; "and, by the way, I see Greyhouse has a friend."

"Yes. A very beautiful woman," replied the

Clerk. "The men admire while the women envy her. They are dining now."

Cleve apparently passed the remark unnoticed. "Have you seen the Nortons go to dinner?"

"They are in their reservation. A little to the right of center in the refectory."

"Let's go," he turned to the Earl.

Seizing a photophone in his room Cleve obtained connection with the Nortons. Mr. Norton's round face appeared and Cleve informed him that the Earl and himself were about to join them. He asked especially about Greyhouse's companion.

"Oh, they are across from us," informed Norton. "She is a good looking creature; but, so far, they haven't dared to look in our direction."

"And Marion?" he asked, anxiously.

"She will not notice him. She wants to speak to you."

Marion came, and said, "Hurry up, poke; I want you to see Greyhouse's new sweetheart. She's surely good-looking."

"As you?" he asked, jokingly.

"I hope not, you goose."

"Greyhouse is trying to make you jealous."

"I guess so," she answered; "at any rate, she is creating a sensation. Everybody is looking and talking about her. Hurry up. Nell passed and pinched me because I had a rival. She whispered that 'you and the Earl would be here to-night!'"

"You arrived safely?" he inquired.

"Yes; but Jackie pouted all the way. She was afraid she had ruined her chances with the Earl. Outside of that we were a jolly crowd."

"Is she expecting the Earl to-night?"

"Yes. After we have had an informal affair in his honor. So hurry and don't keep us waiting."

"We will come as soon as he completes his toilet; and listen, how do the girls feel towards Greyhouse?"

"Snubbed him. We have hardly spoken to him; but come on and we can talk this over when we are alone."

As they entered the magnificent room they were both a little excited, the Englishman from the new surroundings, and Cleve, because he felt an inward "hunch" that something unusual would happen. Would he speak when he met Greyhouse was unsettled in his mind. The spacious hall was an effulgent display itself—a replica of the omnipotent lobby. The everescent yellow was only a continuation to emphasize the color scheme.

The first employee of the dining service pompously directed, without hesitation, the "newly arrivals." As formerly explained the Norton table was slightly to the right of the center of the room. It was enclosed by silver pickets which were supported by two railings of gold. It was an efficacious effect, elevated to be the cynosure at all times. To be invited to this table was the only passport needed to that inner-circle of Clouddwellers' society. Norton loved to exaggerate his riches, and display his self-exaltation to the world.

Cleve heard low hum of voices as they went down the aisle and paused before the auspicious table. As they were about to ascend the golden steps he felt the Englishman's nervous hand grasp his arm; he turned just in time to hear him exclaim in a suppressed voice: "My God! who is that

woman?" Cleve looked in the direction indicated and saw Greyhouse. That was enough. He would not look again; and seizing the startled man by the arm, he prevented, by introducing him to Mr. Norton, a scene which for the moment seemed inevitable.

Norton made the situation easy, when he said: "He had known Lord Summersouth when he was but a lad; and, now, since he had grown to manhood he was more than glad to meet him."

If any of them had noticed the Englishman's strange actions they did not let it be known. After the usual pleasantries and compliments the conversation lulled. Marion engaged the Earl's attention and then Cleve ventured to look in Greyhouse's direction. He was immediately in front of him. He had only to raise his eyes. He dared to look; but quickly diverted his attention in a rapid surprising manner. He began to feel as if he had no blood in his veins. He became numbed, then chilled; then he felt torpid; and then, at last, deadened. The oil of his body ceased to feed the lamp wick of his brain. The light of life was gone, and his skull seemed to encase a hollow as dark as an unlighted cave. Suddenly life came back to him from some unfathomed darkness. Thoughts flashed and re flashed—conclusions crossed and crisscrossed his chaotic mind. Like the Lord of Summersouth, he was crying to himself, "My God! who is that woman?"

It was Humanity dressed in a gorgeous gown with dazzling, gleaming stones of immense value. Why was she here? Why with Greyhouse? Yea! a baffling mystery enshrouded her. She was the

cause of the Englishman's excitement — she, that enigmatic enchantress. Was she mortal or spirit? Was she superhuman? She was not ubiquitous, for she could not reside in that foul Pit and be a Clouddweller. This was impossible, he reasoned.

He ventured to look again. She met him with a greeting smile that sent his blood bounding and making more joyous the sensation at every leap. Her voice came to him, and while her lips did not move, he heard her as he had heard her speak before.

“Dear friend, you no doubt are astonished to see me again, and here with the first man of your city. Do not be so foolish to try to unsolve this question. You, perhaps, may never know. In another or older day you may discover this secret. I see,” her voice went on in that same sweet way, “that Lord Summersouth has come over to this country. He is just a passing acquaintance of a few seasons ago. I met him in Naples at an International Meet. He is a good man and will be your competitor in June (your next Meet). You will be the victor. Lord Summersouth is a Clouddweller like you, and is very ignorant of the forces — the laws that govern the spiritual and material worlds.” To Cleve it was now apparent she was the one and same woman Summersouth had described. As the voice continued it changed in tone: “I see you are dining with your fiancee — she does not love you — she is deceiving you — she loves Greyhouse better than her own life, while she pretends to you she hates him. Her love for you is mercenary; and just to please her and your father who wants to perpetuate the Clevendor-Norton interests by this union; to

gratify a selfish desire to marry the son of the richest man in the world."

Her words angered him. Once before an accusation was traced down to find it nothing but a bold attempt to smirch her good name.

"You think terrible thoughts," the voice said; "you deny my words with great vengeance — this bit of information was given you once before, which you cast aside after you thought you had found out differently. This is all tame to me — your love affair concerns me only to the extent of fair play. I tell you these things to put you on your guard. You think no other man's lips have ever touched the border of her mouth — you are mistaken — you are only one of the many — she is after all nothing but a woman — she is no angel as you have pictured — she —"

Cleve tried to pull himself together — tried to conjure an ugly temper — he could do nothing but listen.

"Should you take this advice depends on your intellectuality; notwithstanding your commercial knowledge is far above the average. But the power of commercialism is waning — you will become more to be pitied than censured — you inflated persons and your high society will soon come to earth again — another force will rule the world. I lower my brain to yours with great effort — your brain is centuries behind in development — you must travel far and long before the dense gloom is dispersed and your slumbering soul within you sees the light of truth."

Cleve began to recover and breathe the atmosphere of the table. Just how long under Human-

ity's influence he didn't know; but the conversation was going on as if nothing had happened — had he been asleep or was Marion trying to jolly him when she said, "That was an apt saying, Cleve."

All the guests were laughing. "I am glad you think so," he stammered.

His keen perception and knowledge of human nature told him that neither guest nor host had noticed his somnambulistic stage. He reasoned at once that while this woman was talking in one ear he was listening to their conversation with the other; and while he did not use his lips to talk to this woman, he had used them in the chit-chat around the table.

This was wonderful. It verified a doctrine which had been preached to him — it proved conclusively that he possessed two minds — he was thrilled to make the discovery — it created a sensation within him like an explorer who had suddenly found a new route to a known land, or an unknown route to a new land. With these spiritual and psychic truths he had always been at variance, this was knowledge from a new world. Humanity was a Psychiatret of a new and higher school — her psychoanalysis, the new science that reveals the secrets of the mind was marvelous.

CHAPTER XV

THE WEIRD SPELL

THE dinner consisted of several courses, and was brought in on a golden wheeled tray, and was served out of gold and silver plates. The knives, forks and spoons were all diamond studded and composed of the same metals. The room seemed to be under some strange influence which appeared to hold the place in a spell — the people's thoughts and actions were governed by an unseen force that cast its dynamic effect at its own volition.

Cleve glanced over the effulgent room — the place was of a lurid yellow — Humanity and her companion, he could see, was the cynosure of a myriad eyes. In Marion's there was a gleam of jealousy. And with a contemptuous smile nodded in Humanity's direction as much as to say they were beneath her notice. The Englishman was reticent, and occasionally would take sly glances at Humanity. Cleve studied him casually and thought that he was living over again his life of four years ago, in Naples.

Mr. and Mrs. Norton appeared to be uninterested in the surroundings and tried to keep up the conversation by introducing commonplace topics; but these were cast aside and the charms of Humanity commanded attention. Whether the com-

ments were favorable or unfavorable, her presence was felt just the same, and whatever direction she chose to look she seemed to conquer and subject.

Greyhouse and his companion were now rising, which caused a hubbub in the otherwise dignified place. The garceful lines of her sylph-like figure shone in wonderful contrast as she rose to her full height, and like a beautiful animal possessed with no conscious understanding of her own charms and powers. Her eyes seemed to radiate the intelligence of centuries and penetrated you with such a mellow warmth that you felt honored when they were centered on you and snubbed when turned away. After deliberately surveying the spacious place and calmly cowering all hostilities, the waiters bowing obeisance to her every whim, she discovered that Cleve was looking at her. She returned his gaze with a charm that sent spasmodic chills coursing up and down his spinal column, and accompanied by Greyhouse made a move to pass them.

As they approached, Cleve felt the metallic table vibrate as if something had struck it. Turning to the Englishman, whom he had for the time forgotten, he saw him in a half-standing position with real joy in his expression and acting as if he were trying to fight some force that had captured him—he was making a mad heroic effort to maintain his composure.

“Who is that damned woman with Greyhouse?” Cleve heard Norton ask. But no one answered, as any response, however suppressed, could have been overheard by Humanity and her escort.

When they drew near the base of the steps that led up to the golden pedestal of the Nortons, Humanity said, "Mr. Clevendor, I am very glad to see you again."

He arose and acknowledged the salutation by leaving his place and the astonished people at the table and going down the steps to greet her. He, for the time being, seemed to forget all his hatred for Greyhouse, which caused much wonderment and speculation among his friends. "I can also say as much for you," he said. "Let me introduce —"

The Earl had followed close behind and was now shaking her hand. "I have met Lord Summersouth before," she replied, and turning to the Englishman asked concerning his health and when he arrived.

The young Lord had almost stumbled over Cleve to get near her, and in an animated voice said, "Seeing you again brings 'Sunny Naples' vividly before me. I am so delighted to see you I hardly know how to talk or act. Tell me, was that you making that music a moment ago?"

She smiled, showing her beautiful even teeth. "Yes. It was at the request of Mr. Greyhouse. I never play otherwise," she added, making a move to go.

"Just a moment," he asked. "Will you tell me the name of that score?"

"Absurd, Mr. Summersouth," she replied pressing forward.

"But I must know," he persisted. "I will go with you."

He appeared to be in earnest and she said, "Lord Summersouth, I have no desire to become

a party to any social estrangement upon which your matrimonial venture depends, and besides, your betrothed may be looking."

Her words staggered him, while Greyhouse maintained his wonderful stoic-like indifference. Marion scanned eagerly the faces of her suitors and glanced furtively at the antics and capers of the seemingly unbalanced Englishman — she was hurt and tried to suppress her surprised indignation but vowed inwardly to never forgive this wanton breach of etiquette.

Mrs. Norton was stung to the core and it was evident that she thought anything but favorably towards the young woman. Norton's face showed an ugly scowl — his bushy eyebrows connected and it was plain he resented the insult and was swearing vengeance against Greyhouse.

As the couple vanished through the door the Norton party was besieged by their friends and bombarded with questions relative to this mysterious woman with Greyhouse. He had the reputation of being very select and had never, so far as could be ascertained, gone outside the narrow confines of their society.

Following the dinner the Earl disappeared with Miss Jackson and repaired to some secluded spot in the garden where they could spend the evening in a way especially adapted to people of their prominence and standing.

Miss Delainey, as usual, gave vent to her opinions and pronounced the Englishman as a "maudlin silly baby," whereupon the girls jeered and said in chorus, "You'll not dare to say that to Nell."

"Wait and see," she returned. However, if it

ever reached the ears of parties directly concerned no one seemed to know it.

Of course Cleve gave an account of his connections with this woman, and on one particular point he had an advantage. No one seemed to realize she was the same woman whom they had seen with him the night of the accident. Her clothing made the change and added a great deal to her beauty, and thus far, not one suspected she was the same Humanity.

Norton had crept stealthily, by a side door, into the garden leaving his wife to entertain the guests at some Clouddweller game. If he was missed no one mentioned it. Mrs. Norton, the Windsthurs sisters and Miss Delainey played in the games, while Cleve, Marion, Nell and the Englishman occupied some inconspicuous place in the garden which they were pleased to call "lovers' retreat."

The garden was a wonderful and minute replica of nature — indoor lawns — shrubbery — trees — artificial lakes and water fowls — water lilies — sparkling marble fountains — green grass and flowers of every known species or that ever lived within the walls of a hot-house.

Cleve and Marion wended their way down a small narrow path bounded by hedges, until they reached a forsaken spot — a rustic bench covered by running vines and natural shrubbery. It was near a running spring that came bounding out of natural rocks and emptied into a small basin below and then into the lake. They could sit upon this bench and watch the swans mate in the lake — they could hear the doves coo and lonesome whip-poor-will's plaintive call — they could hear the lit-

tle squirrel's defiant bark as he sat perched high on the limbs ready to dart in his den at the approach of danger. Cleve often wondered if the animals that roamed this garden as free and leisurely as though it were a native heath, if they ever knew or even cared whether it was a cheap imitation of nature.

"It seems a long time since we were your guests, and had you ever stopped to think, this is the first time I have seen you since we returned to the city."

"Yes," he answered. "This is true. I have not seen you since you played that horrible kimono game on me. I have hardly recovered from the thoughts of it. Did you really want to hide from me when you jumped behind that divan, or was it a subterfuge?"

"I deny it. It was no subterfuge. You are the one that used a ruse and came into our private apartments uninvited. We girls thought we would teach you a lesson, while the offense was fresh on your memory."

"You certainly gave most fiendish punishment. I hope no man will be put to the same experience. To endure those tortures again would turn my hair white."

"I know we treated you badly, dearie," she said in babylike sympathy. "Forgive us?" she continued stroking his dark hair softly.

"No. I can't forgive," he maintained stoutly, at least as long as it was such bliss to hold it against them or her.

"They treated my little boy very cruelly, didn't they?"

"Yes, and I am mad at them for doing it."

"And you'll not forgive us?" she asked.

"No. Indeed, I will not. I am mad—I am very mad—Gee! but I am mad. The idea of putting a female garment on a man. Terrors! Shuddering lightning! Princess of Bombast! Kildees of hightower! Colossus of high-pok-a-tan!! Rip-snorting, fire-eating Ki-yi-kip-i-tan!!! Mad!!!! Yes, I am mad, woman, I'm mad!!!!

"Cleve, my darling, you should not use such profanity," she said putting her arms around his neck and smoothing back his tossed hair, and using a tone of voice that would suppress the strong adjectives that came from his lips like the rapid fire of a machine gun: "I'm the beauty taming the beast," she added, after a time.

A subtle smile crossed his face as he asked, "And you are not mad with me for speaking to that Woman!"

Her face became suddenly achromatic—the natural flush and rose tint of her features went pale and hueless. The glassy and lack of luster look in her eyes startled him—he saw he had asked too much—she was a different creature—her aversions were strong evidence that she hated this woman.

"You are asking too much of me, sir," she said superciliously, rising and standing like an avenging angel. "I do not know that woman, but her actions make me believe that she is something more to you than a friend."

In the dull wanish glow of the garden her eyes seemed to flash sparks like burning rockets from her ashy and decolorized face. Weird and uncanny-like—dressed in white, standing between

him and the dark waters of the lake — her spirit, ghost-like and unearthly for the moment made him speechless. Her apparition, shade or shadow, came like a flashlight vision of the haunted and demoniacal. Her soft folds were winding like a burial shroud. The scene was cadaverous and the lake looked as if it was her sepulchre — the mild wind the death march — the streamlet's falling waters on the rocks was the sermon. "I am going," she spoke again in much bitterness.

"Going!" he repeated, as her voice came to him.

"Yes, I am. Didn't care for Greyhouse being with her, not at all. When you, Lord Summersouth and everybody seemed to be so taken in by her, it hurt beyond endurance."

"She's less than a friend to me," he assured. "Why, I hardly know the woman. She was using Lord Summersouth and myself to make Greyhouse jealous and to strengthen her position in our society; can't you see her object?"

She began to reason that he cared not for this woman and with a faint smile and low laugh, she said, "I have changed, Cleve, I am not going so soon."

"I am glad now we see each other in the true light, and by the way, Marion, how would you like to present that Aviation cup — I'll win it —"

She went pale again. He had made the fatal mistake of placing this woman before her vision in another role. She had uttered a smothered scream, and was falling off the bench — he took hold of her and drew her to an upright position. Seizing a drinking cup from the fountain, filling it with sparkling liquid, he soon revived her. When she

opened her eyes, she asked, "Please don't leave me. Don't call any one — I am right now."

"What on earth," he ventured frightened.

"I am right now," she repeated, trying to smile and observing him intently. Then gazing toward the lake: "What do you suppose I saw just now?"

"I can't imagine," he answered anxiously.

"I saw —" she faltered — "that woman — she was speaking to you — and the jeweled cup."

Terrors! The double vision; certainly, this condition was becoming very uncanny. "Nonsense! it's all a myth," he declared to himself — "it's a chimera of her jealous brain." His excitement increased until he exclaimed aloud, "Marion! that woman and the International Meet had nothing to do with us."

"Perhaps not," she murmured a reply; "but I saw her as plain as if she had been standing right before us."

"You saw a cup also?"

"A wonderful one," she answered.

"Describe it," he requested.

She told what she had seen of it in minute detail. Cleve knew that she had never seen it, and how she could state the number of its jewels so accurately was beyond his comprehension. On several occasions he had been a close competitor for this trophy, which was presented to the association by the King of England, and was now the property of the German Club which had been successful in France at the last Meet. Where he had been in the running all through the race and lost by a few yards, notwithstanding the fact that his motor worked badly. The more he thought of her vision the more com-

plex it became and he could only reply: "I cannot understand, and I cannot dispute it."

"I only see it when something happens to me, such as fainting," she added.

"I can't understand," he repeated. "It's all a great puzzle. I can say, however, in reference to this woman, she cares no more for me than you do for Greyhouse."

She started at this statement; turned her face from him: "Well, then, I am satisfied," she said in a husky voice.

Suddenly, as if all the celestial harps were in harmony the huge organ began to play. The Heavens had opened.

"My God!" he exclaimed in an undertone, "it's that woman or spirit at the organ again." He felt the tightening grip of Marion's hand on his arm and the jealous gleam from her eyes—it was stronger than ever before. She tried to speak, but the muscles of her mouth prevented sound. This score was a different one. It was wild, weary and gruesome, and as if some dying soul cried for a friendly face before it departed on the unknown river, on which no boatman returns.

The atmosphere became charged with some invisible force that benumbed the senses. With the effect of death a melancholy condition unpowered him. He glanced at Marion—her eyes were soft and tears were on her cheeks, accompanied by low jerky sobs. He tried to rise but his limbs felt like so much lead and he fell back to the bench as if composed of so much metal. In mad determination he combated his deadly, odylic force to no avail. At last he lost control and acted at the voli-

tion of some higher intelligence like an obedient child.

What was in those music waves that came like a magic wand and made everything bend to it? What sorcery—what black art—what demonology lay hidden in those incantatory notes that fell with gripping cabalistic and talismanic effect? Was it the voice of Satan or God?—was it a necromancer at the organ sending a message to the living from the City of Necropolis?—was it a message to the worshipers of Baal (The Golden Calf) and this modern commercialism? Was it a warning—“a handwriting on the wall?” These thoughts overwhelmed his obfuscated brain.

What occult art?—occult science was in that music which cast its enchanting evil eye and fee-fan-fum spells in its weird phylacteric texts in its physic way? What hocus-pocus, sortilege and divination was in the throbbing pulse of the fetish organ? What inspiration was prophetically revealed? What ministering spirit touched those ivories that sent those hallowed and celestial communications to a calloused world? Surely, it was Humanity's electrobiology that held them in this mesmeric spell. He felt Marion's arm about his neck and as he kissed her tear-stained cheek he heard a piercing feminine cry. He looked toward the other side of the lake and saw a woman swoon and a man run away.

The pale lurid light of the garden grew a shade darker and then darker still, and as he opened wider his eyes to pierce the gloom he heard the organ notes grow fainter and fainter, until at last,

they were swallowed up by the murmur of the little stream.

The birds who had so joyously chirped in the shrubbery had long since hushed their plaintive notes, and were, perhaps, listening to a far greater music than their little throats could ever produce. As the music died away a complete silence enveloped him. Even Marion, her arms about him, seemed far away—no sound came to him—he felt like being lifted on angels' wings, and higher and higher he appeared to go. Suddenly, the darkness was dispelled and it began to grow light—brighter and brighter; and he found himself in a strange land with wonderful surroundings—he was in Heaven—the Olympus or the Elysian fields!

He was in the garden of Hesperides—grand and paradisaical. He could see the inhabitants of this new place—they were idealistic, happy and contented. The streets were of marble and glistened in white and cleanliness. Every building was a palace graced by lawns and adorned with flowers. No structures of iron pyramided to the clouds and lost themselves in the skies greeted his eyes. He saw no Pit with dirty avenues or Clouddwellers' skyscrapers. He saw only a glimpse of the Arcadia and the City of Brotherly love.

He awoke from the dream. The organ had ceased. Marion was by his side and she exclaimed: "Cleve, where have you been? I thought some Archangel, the host of Heaven, came down and carried you up to the morning star."

"Dear, I feel numb and chilly," he answered, as the haze cleared and he recovered control of his

limbs. "I heard a woman scream a moment ago, perhaps we had better see what is the trouble."

"Very well," she said, and he caught the cold gleam of her eyes as she arose. "I heard the first sound," she continued, "then something came over me. I dreamed you went up with some Angels. I thought that Woman was with them."

"You are talking about that organ?" he asked. She was such a different creature he thought and continued, "we had better quit talking about the dream and *this* woman and try to be of some assistance to those in trouble."

She acquiesced: "I hope nothing has happened to the guests."

A short way up the path they met Miss Jackson. She was terribly excited and looked as though she had had some dreadful experience. Her face was greatly agitated and she carried herself as if she might have been fifty years older. Her features were contorted and the luster of her eyes was gone. She was walking hurriedly towards them.

"I am glad to see some human face," she cried. "Bedeviled spell! Marion, did you too experience this open seance with the devil? I hope I shall never go through such a scene again. Why, when the music started," she went on, "Lord Summersouth acted like a mad man. He tore his hair and cried like a baby for Naples. He talked of a woman whom he knew and had heard her play like that. I tried for several minutes to keep him with me, but he quit me cold. Then, all of a sudden, a ghost came before my eyes. I tried to keep my courage. I tried to think it was all my imagination; but, when this apparition came again, it was

no use. It caught me and I cried aloud. I'll tell you now I don't want to go through this again. No, never!"

"Where is the Englishman?" asked Marion.

"Don't ask me. The Lord knows, I don't," she answered with a serious look coming into her eyes. "I'm half sick of him anyway."

"Don't say it, Jackie. You know you are wild about him," returned Marion.

"If you are not afraid to stay here alone," put in Cleve, "I will look for him. I don't think you should censure Nell as we (all four of us) have had the same gruesome spell placed over us."

His words lifted a great load from her heart, and her face brightened as she said, "I am so glad to hear you say that. I thought the Englishman and myself were the only fools in the garden. It was hard to tell which one of us was the craziest."

"Then go to the retreat," said Cleve.

"It's the best place to wait," said Nell. "We started to go there when we left the dining-room, but the Earl wanted to look the place over and when we started there we discovered you were there already, and as we didn't want to see . . . we turned our attention in the other direction."

"Oh! so kind and very thoughtful of you, Jackie," returned Marion, ironically.

"They wanted to do the same thing," put in Cleve. "Now honest, Jackie, wasn't that the reason you left us so readily?"

"Why, Cleve, I didn't think you could be so rude," interceded Marion.

"Thanks, Marion," said Nell, blushing. "However, this is not finding the Lord of Summersouth."

"Then go and find him," pleaded Marion, addressing Cleve. "You want him."

"Oh, I suppose so; but if he is going to act so silly again, I think it best for him to stay where he is, unless he is already in the mad-house," she replied.

CHAPTER XVI

THE ENGLISHMAN VISITS MURD'S ROW

As Cleve started to find Lord Summersouth he thought he would go by the secret passage to the conservatory, but changed his mind before entering, and went through the glaring rotunda. Mrs. Norton and the guests were just coming out of the drawing room, and when he met them they were very excited, having also come under the spell of the organ; but they became somewhat relieved when he told them the girls were still in the garden.

Cleve's object in going through the lobby was to see what effect the music had in this place. There he found the throng wondering and bombarding each other with many questions. Here he did not stop, but continued on.

His purpose in going for the Earl was twofold — he wanted to see Humanity again — he did not deny it himself — he wanted to see and thank her for the music.

The place was brilliantly lighted — the same flashlight performance of the lobby appeared to be going on — heavy draperies of spangled gold hung high above the polished silver floor. The walls were engraved with descriptive scenery and the ceiling was a mass of innumerable lights, with every shade and color and the eternal yellow always predominating.

He paused before the silver door which was made in imitation of an oaken door of some mediæval castle. It was ajar and was supported by hinges of gold, and while it was heavy and massive it opened with but the slightest touch of the finger, without noise, save only the swish of the air it propelled. In the entrance the huge instrument with its many pipes greeted him. He surveyed the chamber. "Gone," he muttered, disappointed. He looked again—they were there—his heart beat faster—he choked back the words that cried, "Curse that Englishman. What right had he to be here, anyway? Curse Greyhouse, too. What right had he to dine with her?" But, on second thought what grounds did he, himself, have to base a claim; had he not ordered her out of his office—she had obeyed, and to-night she spoke to him without trace of anger. He thought, a woman like her was worthy of any man's love.

In the doorway he faltered between thought and action. "What right did he have here anyway?" he thought. He was already an engaged man—he could not cast Marion aside. Yes, he loved her and she loved him and this Humanity was but a passing fancy—a stranger with magnetic power—from Murd's row (he shuddered) and not a suitable companion for a Clouddweller!

Did he think of her as his wife? he asked himself. Yes, and the thought startled him. She his wife? Impossible! It would kill his father, and decent people would laugh at him. But . . . the Englishman; he would marry her if she would have him. She was sly and wanted higher game. Was she after him? Yes. . . . No, she cared for

no man. Free lover, mistress? What a lie! Newman had branded that hint. She may be a misogynist and would marry no man.

What business of his if the Englishman did like Humanity? But why did he develop a sudden dislike for him? Standing there talking they were the only ones in the room — she was with her back to the organ, her hands clasping the keyboard. The Earl was on the pedestal near her, so near, in fact he could have taken her in his arms, and Cleve thought such a course would have been excused under the circumstances.

Flowers almost hid them from his view — she appeared so enchanting — so alluring, the young Lord regarded her an angel and was ready to become her servant if she would but notice him. He felt the mad inclination to drive him away — smash his face — as possibly he had done Greyhouse's. But where was Greyhouse? He could not see him with them. He must have gone under cover the moment the Lord appeared. However, he would watch them and if Humanity acted anyway less than a lady he would put her out of his mind forever.

He was so far away that he could not hear their conversation, but she was shaking her head and motioning toward the empty seats. The Englishman was trying to persuade her to play again, he thought, and she was explaining that should she play again the place would likely become crowded again. Why did she want to spend her time with this young Earl when she could be doing a far greater good by playing. Thus being angered and losing control of himself he walked boldly toward

them. Humanity looked at him with an expression of face that quickly drove him to explain his actions.

"Lord Summersouth," he began angrily, and with condemnation in his voice, "Miss Jackson has sent me to follow you and ask that you return. She wants you."

"Tell Miss Jackson I am engaged at present," he answered curtly, turning his back to Cleve and resuming his conversation with Humanity.

Humanity uttered a little liquid laugh and looked him over coolly, and addressing the Earl, she said: "And you are not afraid to go home with me?" seemingly to forget that Cleve was near.

"No, I am not," he replied. "Just let me — it is all I ask. I will go anywhere, everywhere, nothing this side of the stygian shore will stop me. I'll —"

"That will do," she interrupted. "I am not a Clouddweller. I live in the Pit. Will you go there to my home?"

"I will. Just let me — just let me," he continued to cry.

Cleve felt stung — slapped full in the face with a damp towel. "Curse them both," he thought. He tried to go, but somehow he could not. He was forced to listen.

"Think, Lord Summersouth, of your social ostracism," she commanded.

"Social ostracism with whom? — these people?" he asked sneeringly. "These Americans? Why, they are a bunch of mawkish snobs. Their common ancestry sticks out on their rugged faces like knots on an untrimmed gate post."

"I demand an apology," said Cleve advancing threateningly, his face flamed and determined.

"Men, you forget yourselves," said Humanity. "If you are going to be brutal and show your animal natures, I must excuse myself. I have no desire to witness a scene of jungle life. This is no place for combat and if you are going to do this, I will take my leave. You, Mr. Clevendor, have much to learn."

Cleve stopped short, but the fighting blood was still in his face—he longed to beat the Englishman's head into a pulp. Perhaps he had acted rudely by his quick resentment and he showed his common ancestry by his readiness to fight.

"Forgive me," he pleaded, addressing Humanity.

"Certainly," she answered; "but you must first apologize to Lord Summersouth. He also owes you an apology—you were both to blame for this affair. It was ungentlemanly in you both, and now since you have shaken hands"—as they took each other's hand in their own—"I still think you are both good men after all."

She went on, and now addressing the Englishman: "And you wish to go to my home?"

"Yes," he returned elated.

"You will go with me to Murd's row?" she asked.

"Yes. I will. I will go with you to any place. Where you reside there are good people; if this were not so, I am sure you would not stay there," he said.

"Have you heard of the Murds?" she asked.

"Yes. I know of them," he replied.

"You are not astonished at me—"

"I will live with you and them, if you will only let me," he cried.

In the bottom-most depths of his heart he wished all the evil in the world would blight the invidious Englishman's life. The fool would go to the Pit — to that loathsome place, just to be with this woman. He would give up his rank, his wealth and his present society just to be near her. But, why not? Surely she was worth the all of it. What made these exotic thoughts creep into his mind? What did he care for a thousand Humanities? She was just a woman and he could have any woman his fancy desired. Of course, he could get Humanity if he wanted her.

They were about to go. Humanity turned and addressed Cleve: "Mr. Clevendor, you have nothing of interest to say to me, so I will bid you good night." She merely glanced at him as she conferred a wondrous smile on the Earl.

Did she dare tell him to go. She did, and he heard her only too well. She had answered him as he had answered her. She told him that. She asked him and decided in favor of the other, and right in his own hotel, too.

He had been chasing rainbows — this woman cared nothing for him — he was very egotistical — but he must be recognized.

"This I'll not accept," he answered stubbornly.

"Then I will go," she returned, offering the Earl her arm.

CHAPTER XVII

THE ATTEMPTED ASSAULT

CLEVE watched Humanity and the Englishman as they walked down the aisle and out through the door — he knew not what to do or say — he was dumbfounded and so astonished — he had never been snubbed. Her wonderful independent nature made him ponder — he could not unfold to himself the mystery of who she was.

A desire to follow them seized him, but they were bound to Murd's row and he could not hardly afford to go there. And besides he wanted to be true to the woman he was to marry.

At all hazards, he wanted to take Summersouth back to Nell, but since he had refused, what could he do? If he told her he had jilted her for this woman it might make her suffer greatly — the thought bothered him — perhaps, a story he might invent, "that he had not seen him," would do her good and save her the ordeal of crying. But it was preposterous to think of her doing so — he had never seen her shed a tear — her eyes were without lachrymal glands; but, this was different, the Englishman quitting her might effect her pride and possibly make her do so.

He made his way back to the bench in the garden where the girls were still waiting for him. "Did

you find him?" Nell greeted, hardly giving time for him to come within range of her voice.

He at first thought he would tell the truth, but decided it would best to break the news slowly and more gentle. "No," he answered.

The girls were silent — not a sound was audible save the water of the little stream bounding over the rocks pulled by the law of gravitation.

"Any signs of him?"

"Yes — to be honest — I saw him with that woman Greyhouse had with him at dinner to-night."

This confession brought acrimony in her face — a gleam from the black depths of her eyes, and he knew Summersouth was getting a furious mental drubbing.

"I wouldn't care," consoled Marion. "He is unworthy of you, and is a c—"

"A contemptible puppy," supplied Cleve, remembering what he had said about Americans. "I think he has no regard for us."

"I don't care so much," said Nell, tears coming to her eyes; "but he has hurt my feelings and I can never forgive him. No. Never!"

"Nell, I wouldn't do that," cheered Marion, looking anxiously at Cleve. "Though it is a shame, and I can't blame you."

"I am not grieving," she replied, looking up quickly with watery drops on her cheeks — "I mean — I mean not over this English monkey. He has quit me because he has discovered that we are poor now — money was the all he was after. My poor old father . . ."

"I can give your father a position," brightened

Cleve, trying to uplift the cloud that had come upon her.

"No; father will not, or cannot accept."

"Don't — Jackie; don't say it," interrupted Marion. "Your father will and must take this position."

"I would consider it an insult if offered by any one else besides Cleve . . . and, I can't think of papa working. I . . . can't bear it. It is awful," she moaned, and covered her face with her hands.

"Don't, Nell. For the Lord's sake, don't! I can't hear you cry that way; and perhaps, you are not so bad off after all," comforted Marion.

To Cleve women were unknown quantities. Here was this beautiful girl ready to tie herself for life to a man she didn't love in order to better or maintain her social standing. She was pretty, well shaped and vivacious enough to set any man's heart afire.

Jackson & Company had been the last opposition of the syndicate stores and had been allowed to exist only through friendship on the part of Cleve's father. Now this small Company would or had become a trouble maker and stood in the way of the C. & N. Co.'s big business idea. Nell's father would not work for the Consolidated Farm & Development Co., because he had a thousand curses for Norton and all the Norton interests. Cleve was confident his father knew nothing of the failure or any of the circumstances leading up or around it. Norton was the operative general and was without doubt the cause of all this and all the trouble in the Jackson family. Norton, he believed, had some evil motive, other than mercenary satisfaction,

and of this his father had no knowledge. He must be told — he must know and if no one else would tell, he would do it himself.

“No, Marion, this is the last time I shall ever see you. I am going away,” she said.

“You are not going to leave us?” they both pleaded.

“Yes,” with bitterness in her voice, “I am going I know not where. The Pit . . . I guess, will find me!”

“Mercy sakes, Jackie! Do you know what you are saying? Please don’t talk like that,” Marion supplicated with earnestness.

“Yes, I am going. There’s everything but sincerity in this society — it’s rotten — I’m insulted often, and by whom you would least suspect. My father knows and opposed my coming to-night,” she affirmed.

She was crying and threw herself into Marion’s arms, sobbing: “Kiss me before I go; you have been my only sister.”

“Jackie, this is foolishness!”

“You don’t understand. I must go. The Pit will find me!”

“That’s where Summersouth went to-night,” said Cleve.

“I’ll find him then,” she returned mockingly.

“Think of those mean men and women — the class you will have to associate with. Just think of it,” Marion beseeched.

“No worse than I have found here,” she answered bitterly.

“Why, Jackie! How can you say this?”

“Yes, and perhaps as bad. They are no worse

in the Pit. The only difference, there they tear rags; here they tear silks," she affirmed emphatically.

"Why, girlie! Do you know what you are saying?" she cried.

"You, perhaps, will never know — you are protected — I'm not. Your money shields you, and if I remained here without it, my name would be a byword throughout eternity," she said.

She gave a low hysterical laugh and ran rapidly away from them. Marion attempted to follow her but Cleve retained her by holding her arm. "No use," he consoled, "no use, Marion. When a woman talks that way, there's a reason."

She had not gone far when they heard a sharp scream, and Cleve rushed in all haste to her leaving Marion behind.

What he saw proved the truth of her remarks. She was struggling in the arms of a big man — she cried again for help — he yelled, "I'm coming."

The villain slunk away — the girl freed from the gorilla-like embrace went running on her way. The man dodged behind the shrubbery — he saw him crouching in the bushes. It was enough — he saw it was Norton.

"For the sake of God! Man, run! Your daughter is coming!" he cried.

"Is it you, Cleve?" he heard Norton ask.

"Yes. And if you were not Marion's father I would —" he paused in his vehement answer.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE FAILURE OF JACKSON AND COMPANY

THE following morning the deep sounding voice of the Daily Labor roused Cleve from his slumbers — he rubbed his eyes and sat upright as the words reached his ears: “Last evening, Miss Nell Jackson (daughter of the broken store magnate) was insulted. It is thought by many the assault was committed by a young English Nobleman who is a guest of the Hotel Marion. We wish to make this correction on behalf of Lord Summersouth. He was not in the place at the time the dastardly act was attempted, therefore, it must have been made by one of those wealthy monsters who dwell in that bloodthirsty rendezvous.”

Cleve was now wide awake — that is one time, he thought, that miserable magniphone has told the truth. It continued: “This proves that those aristocratic inmates will not only rob you of your life’s blood, but women, as well, are ever an object of prey.”

Following this sentence he closed the small reflectorscopephone, and glanced at the time of day. It was late, really later than he thought. When he left Marion the night before he knew the hour was between midnight and the grey dawn. His lateness at retiring and the “bell-hops” not call-

ing accounted for his hour in bed. He had several matters of business to attend to this morning; first, was to see his father about the aviation meet and this ordeal he dreaded very much.

As he slipped out of bed he wondered what had become of the Englishman, and what explanation he would give for his behavior. Nell was gone, and perhaps, gone for good. "Poor girl," he thought, "it's the law of the game." A dark scowl crossed his face as he thought of Norton's part. It may be right to make war on men, but on women it was very different.

Mrs. Norton and the girls censured the Earl for Nell's disappearance, and vowed they would never have any more use for him. Cleve, with Marion's assistance, explained that Summersouth had left the garden long before she had gone away, and trying to clear the Earl and shield Norton, created a situation that took the strategy of a diplomat to handle the pointed questions propounded to him.

As few had access to the garden and no one was seen to enter, Mrs. Norton was far from being satisfied and declared intentions of placing her private detective on the case. But after Marion repeated Nell's statements relative to their society, Mrs. Norton desisted, never dreaming her husband was the foul actor that caused the Jacksons' downfall.

Suddenly his photophone rang and the Englishman's agitated face appeared. "I am sorry to bother you," he explained; "but I have some very important matter I want to discuss."

"Very well," Cleve assented; "after my bath

and my turn with my masseur I will see you. I presume you stayed here last night?"

"Yes; and, by Jove, I want to compliment that bed. I only spent a few hours in it — but I want to see you."

"I will see you as soon as these fellows get through with me."

The young Lord's face vanished from the mirror and Cleve thought, "quite a different person this morning. Not so haughty and really wants to see me. Last night this he wouldn't do." In the lounge he found him excited and wearing a distressed look.

"I am so glad to see you," he said piteously, and his lofty pride gone. "I don't know what to do, or how to act."

"You have heard?" asked Cleve gravely.

"Yes, after that woman dismissed me in a dark street and I found my way back here with no little ease."

Cleve's own spirits arose. Humanity had toyed him and dropped him. Poor fool! He tried to play two women and had lost them both.

"I heard," he went on, the muscles of his face tightening and his long fingers closing as if ready to strike. "How I wish I had been here to defend her. I couldn't sleep for thinking about it. I tried to get her last night, but it was impossible. I have just returned from her home this morning — no one is there except creditors who are scrambling to get any article of value. I inquired for the Jacksons, and one brutal creditor mistook me for a relative and gave me this blow on the head," he said placing his hand to where a knot appeared beneath his hair.

"Then you know what happened here?" Cleve asked.

"Yes," he returned very gloomily.

"You must feel sorry for deserting her," answered Cleve, half sympathizing and half condemning the young suitor.

"Yes," he agreed, his face admitting his guilt. "I don't understand. I can't comprehend; but then," he continued assuming a cynical look, "what more could be expected of these American women?"

A sense of gentlemanly propriety restrained Cleve's strong fingers from clutching the Englishman's throat: "I see, Lord Summersouth, you are inclined to wreak your vengeance on the whole class of our women, because one or two have jilted you. You should respect your mother's country. Doubtless you have forgotten!"

"No—" he paused—"I have not; but the American women have apparently changed since my mother's day."

"That's a nice subterfuge, I must say," returned Cleve.

"It is not one. It's the truth," he maintained stoutly. "I speak as an outsider and without bias. However, Mr. Clevendor, I do not wish to debate this subject, and am wasting time that could be used in searching for Miss Jackson."

"You may be searching, Mr. Summersouth, but I am not. Nell told Marion and myself where she expected to go. Her destination was the Pit."

"The Pit!" exclaimed Summersouth.

"Yes, and that is all I know about her."

"You have no inclination to look for her?" he asked pointedly.

"None whatever. She passed out of our society last night — she's the same as if she never existed to us. My advice to you, sir, would be for you to forget her."

"I cannot," the young Earl replied.

"You did last night when you left her for this other woman," Cleve retorted.

"The whole of last evening seems like a dream. I had no control over myself," he answered weakly.

"Then, dream again," spoke Cleve sardonically.

"I don't understand," he said, looking puzzled, "whether you are joking or not." He accented the "not" as though giving it the benefit of the doubt.

"Why," Cleve continued, "if I could dream of her, I would all the time, and try to forget this Miss Jackson. You can't compare Humanity to any woman. It is impossible to do so. Women and men are only inferiors by her side."

"From this standpoint you are right," he said as if speaking confidential. "I have known both before, and between them, I prefer Humanity."

Cleve decided that Summersouth was wild over Humanity and couldn't help himself — he even blushed at the mention of her name — he was crazy about her. Now as he had failed to get Nell his chances were even worse with Humanity than no chance at all. Perhaps this was more the cause of his crestfallen condition. "You have my sympathy," said Cleve, "but let me speak plain. It is useless to follow her — she does not care for you now — you have made an impression that you can never right with her."

"You believe it?"

"I do."

"Advise me."

"Merely forget," replied Cleve, emphatically.
"That's all you can do."

"Pardon me, gentlemen, if I have intruded," said Mr. Newman as he entered the room.

"Oh, no; glad to see you," remarked Cleve.

"You have heard about Peter Jackson," said Newman looking at the young Lord.

"Yes," they answered.

"It's a beastly outrage; that's all I have to say about it. Your father knows too, Cleve, and is greatly worried. You know he let this business stand."

"I know it was my father's wish," Cleve replied.

"What mortifies me," continued Newman, "Jackson was pressed by one high in the circle of the C. & N. Co."

"All because of a woman," Cleve supplied.

"You know this?" queried Newman.

"A supposition only."

"You intimate?" he asked.

"Ask Norton," he replied, looking at Summersouth, who was now white and trembling.

"I thought so," sneered Newman. "When your father is no more, my boy, you and I will have a hard time of it."

"That may be true," agreed Cleve.

"It's up to Mr. Summersouth to settle with Norton," returned Newman.

"I desire no encounter with a beast with my fists; but I'll fight either with sword or pistol," said Summersouth.

"Now you are talking—go after him," sided Newman.

"Gentlemen, this is outrageous!" cried Cleve.

"For you?" asked Newman. "Place yourself in Lord Summersouth's position. What would you do?"

"I do not care to discuss the question."

"No. Not while your father-in-law, to be, is the subject," returned he sarcastically.

"Mr. Newman—"

"Yes, it is Mr. Newman who speaks, my boy, and is astonished at your mildness in taking things."

Cleve was silent. Newman had spoken the truth. Norton was a man that should not be defended. His love for Marion had kept him from doing what Newman and the Englishman wanted to do now.

"This is not my fight," he said. "If you wish to execute your decision, that also, is no affair of mine. I have intimated and have told you—I am saying all I am going to say about it. It was all because of a woman. She was strong—the family lost all its financial prestige to retain one of its members. This states the cause of the Jackson failure in a few words. Now, if Mr. Summersouth, Peter Jackson, or anybody else wants revenge, the man is known!"

When Cleve finished, Mr. Newman seemed with great effort to be suppressing his hatred of Norton. Summersouth was nervous, and looked as if he, too, shared Newman's feelings.

"If you wish to marry a true woman, Lord Summersouth," continued Cleve, "you can find her

in the person of Nell Jackson. She has stood the test."

"Good morning, gentlemen," said a burly figure appearing in the doorway. It was Norton, himself. "Mr. Newman, I am so glad to see you," he went on, extending his hand which Newman took mechanically.

"Why," he continued, "your atmosphere is rather chilly. I—" He glanced at Cleve, which revealed the situation. Then, with a contemptuous sneer he said, "I came to talk of the C. F. & D., but I see I am an intruder."

"The Company is doing well enough, Mr. Norton, thank you, sir," returned Newman.

"There's an implication in the construction of your remark which I don't like—which I don't like, Mr. Newman. You understand, I said I don't like," he reiterated, his face growing red.

"I heard you the first time, Norton," replied Newman unintimidated.

"I will excuse such language, Mr. Newman; but an underling should know his place," shot Norton. "We have used you—we have used you well. You were a Benedict Arnold to the Pit and how soon shall we expect you to turn traitor to us?"

Cleve's hero went down under the cutting words—once before when in the strike he cowed and was ready to hoist the white flag.

"And furthermore," continued Norton, "when we wanted a dirty piece of legislation we had you—and, we paid you well. You intellectual prostitute! Lord Summersouth," he said, turning to him, "I am glad to see you again and I am willing to

finance the Aviation Meet for the Clevendor interest, if Cleve's father does not favor it. I will do all I can to aid you in this proposition."

The young Earl thanked him profusely for his generosity and warmed over to him, forgetting the duel he had fought a moment ago in his mind.

"You will hear many things said about me," Norton went on, "calculated to impair my good name; but, you know Mr. Summersouth, the world is jealous of a successful man and I am generous to forgive them."

This confused the Englishman and he apparently doubted what Cleve had unfolded. Norton seemed to be so liberal — so fair towards those who wished to do him wrong.

"I am accused of," he went on, "and on the surface it may appear so, but Peter Jackson is now behind bars, put there for admixturing and adulterating foods, which many millions have put into their stomachs not knowing they were eating poison. This is the latest — it came a moment ago. I see you have the reflectorscopephone closed and doubtless you have not heard. He was arrested this morning at daylight for violating the pure food law. So, there you are. It was the Government and not Norton who caused the downfall of this good family."

"Mr. Norton, I have been against you," said the Earl; "but I am now your friend, and I want you, your wife and daughter to visit my home in England."

Cleve was disgusted with the sycophantic Englishman. Norton began to speak: "I shall be glad and I am sure Marion and her mother will be de-

lighted. My wife requests the pleasure of your company to lunch to-day. You are also invited," he said turning to Cleve; "but I should not ask you as you have a standing invitation, you know."

"Yes, I know; but I have business with father this morning and ask you to excuse me," said Cleve, glad of this plausible outlet, and Norton's eyes lowered as he met the young man's gaze.

"You may, also, come along, Mr. Newman," Norton added.

"I would go to jail first," he answered, taking the advantage of the first chance to hit back at him.

"Keep up your course and you will be there soon enough," returned Norton.

Norton left arm in arm with the Englishman — Cleve and Newman eyed each other laughingly. "That man is the limit," spoke Newman. "A moment ago he wanted to murder the insulter of his intended wife — now, he goes to dine with the beast. 'Don't that beat the Jews?'"

"He simply makes me sick," replied Cleve.

"I should think jealous," returned Newman.

"Why?"

"He's after Marion now. Can't you see through it?"

"Curse him —"

"Yes, you may curse him! But now, since there's no hope for the Jackson girl he is after your mortgaged property. And — I don't believe that old crafty fox of a father would object."

"He may not. But she will —"

"I am not so sure about that," put in Newman. "He's a good-looking 'sort of chap,' and these Nortons are apparently warming up to him."

"I'll block his game," Cleve assured.

"You may, and you may not — society people of the Clouds are as fickle as corporation lawyers — they always believe in the side that has the most money," he answered.

"Well, I have the most money," said Cleve.

"Yes. But you have no title, my boy."

"Look here, Mr. Newman, you tried to make me think she was untrue once before, but I got the facts in the case."

"You beat me that time," he replied; "but what's 'born in the bone will out in the flesh.' She is a 'chip off the old block.'"

"Yes, that's the truth; but you are prejudiced against Norton."

"My God! What of this beastly act? Would not that alone make a decent man hate him?" Newman expostulated.

"Well — yes," Cleve answered.

"He has as many loop-holes as a cat has lives. You know how easily he got over the Jackson affair, and I'll bet he's the cause of him being in jail, if what he told us is the truth. Jackson was as 'honest as the days are long.' If you are going to marry his daughter you had better get busy — Greyhouse and this Englishman are both after her and she is going to wed somebody in trousers before long."

"Why do you think so?"

"I can see it in her eyes — she is not stable — she will tire of her first husband and before he wakes up to the realization she will be flirting with some other man."

"I don't like to hear you say it — but if you

keep on — I will soon believe what you say is the truth.”

“I am speaking for your own good,” he answered.

“Look at the situation — the country — the social unrest! Do you think I should marry and the mobs in the streets crying for bread?”

“You have asked a question I can’t answer; but, if you wish to marry her, may success crown your every move.”

CHAPTER XIX

CLEVE VISITS HIS FATHER

COLONEL CLEVENDOR was to finance in America what Napoleon was at one time to the political affairs of France, except, Napoleon was absolute dictator of France and half of Europe; while the nations of the world must pay tribute to Clevendor the I. He is felt in every zone, in every clime where people eat and breathe. In every nook and corner of the globe we find articles necessary to life coming, directly or indirectly, from sources controlled by him.

While the power of men may be felt from hemisphere to hemisphere, yet are they happy? Let us analyze this one: The old veteran was past seventy, aged perhaps, prematurely by his mode of living — chronic indigestion — subject to moods and depressions — susceptible to being cold and melancholy — hated more and loved less than any King, Emperor or Monarch — a mountain of gold at his command, and yet can't buy or gain one pure drop of human love.

In his face you see the genius — the general — the organizer — the veteran of many hard fought financial battles. In his person you see the victor — the results, and from a pair of brown eyes that search you suspiciously, from beneath a massive brow, you see and feel the man.

He began life a fighter — being the son of poor parents it was necessary to fight desperately and madly until fortune favored him. Other men struggled harder and more often to succeed but failed — he was the survival of the fittest — one by one the great factories fell into his hands. Opposition was crushed to the wall — money began to accumulate — he was greedy — to make more and more became his second nature — people called him “insane,” “money-mad,” but he heard them not.

In middle life he married a woman by the name of Belle Blutwine, who died soon after the birth of his only son, Cleve. She was one of the leaders of her set during her single life but after marriage her course was completely revoked and she was retired and strictly confined to the Clevendor mansion. It was hinted that this beautiful and accomplished lady died of a broken heart. Affection was an unknown quantity in Clevendor’s metallic soul and it was not capable of diffusing that which it did not know.

After his marriage he was seldom seen at any of the clubs nor did he frequent the regular haunts — he ceased to continue the life of his younger days and the life to which his wife was adapted. He lived the jealous life of a miser and guarded his wife from the eyes of men as painstakingly as he would the hiding place of his gold. His chief aspiration lay in the accumulation of wealth and not once, night or day, did his mind rest when it beheld a chance to enrich himself. He was as wakeful and watchful as a yard-dog at the midnight hour.

Cleve grew to manhood without the love of a father. The short time he spent at the home it seemed like a prison — his father was as cold as the marble that marked the dreary interior of the large spacious rooms.

While the people were starving, and the cry for help was raised as often as the clock ticked, Cleve's father heeded them not. All reforms tending to improve the dreadful conditions were checkmated by him — reformation was an impossibility. The Legislatures, the Judiciary and Pulpit were dominated by his influence. Demagogues and sycophants proclaimed his virtues and heralded his greatness, while honest Statesmen held their tongues in silence and in obedience to his authority.

Cleve was aware as he was about to enter his father's little room that the affairs of the nation were narrowing to a dramatic crisis — he knew the Clevendor interests would soon be facing a violent and dangerous tempest. The President of the nation was weak and all the law-making bodies, great and small, would be frightened as the mobs, hungry and crying for bread, demanded new liberties. He knew that strikes, lockouts, the destruction of life and property would soon be the order of the day. Business failures, murders, robberies and suicides would greet you on every hand and no law would intercede. Officials would act in name only and no law would be known save the mob rule of the streets. Men would be without honor and women without virtue — Pitdwellers would murder the Clouddwellers — they would rob their bodies and escape. He felt Newman's pessimism — it was coming — coming sure as fate. All would be

hopeless and a state of anarchy would reign supreme!

An offensive smell of the close room occupied by his father greeted his nostrils — he stood near the slightly opened door and could see the furniture looked old and neglected. Everything had the appearance of great reverses — he felt like a stranger or an uninvited guest. He could see his father as he sat at the little shabby desk, pale, wan and an unsteady nervous look in his eyes. He looked as if living in constant fear of something — deep mutterings came from his lips as if going over something in his past life. The young man brushed a tear from his cheek — he was sorry for and pitied his old father even if he were cold and eccentric.

Suddenly a smile crossed the old man's features — it was the smile of the conqueror, cold and vindictive. He looked as if he was thinking when he had sent an opposing concern crushing to the earth and had turned defeat into victory. Cleve pushed the door ajar and entered. For a moment they looked at each other with no visible signs of love — the father appeared to regret the son had entered, the son seemed to fear the ordeal.

"Well," the old man snapped, "more money?"

"Yes," the young man answered, stoutly.

"It's a terrible way you spend it," the father growled. "Newman has told me of an English Lord who is over here to get me to finance an Aviation proposition."

"What else have I to do but spend?" Cleve asked.

“Go to work and make it like I did,” the Colonel returned.

“I have made money with the C. F. & D.”

“If you did, you gave it all away,” answered the old man.

“Didn’t try to make money with it.”

“You didn’t.”

“No, it was Newman’s wish, and according to your orders.”

“What? I want you to understand that Newman is not running the Clevendor interests.”

The younger man looked earnestly at the older: “You sent Mr. Newman with orders, and I thought you wanted me to follow his instructions. Now, you ask me to go to work; but, where?”

“Don’t ask me. I am not a labor bureau. That’s the cry I hear all the time — every minute in the day. Out in the streets, everywhere, it haunts me until I am almost mad. Mad, do you hear? They say I am to blame — they lie — I know not why there are so many poor. This problem has disturbed me every hour of the day and every day in the year — I have had enough — I will not stand for any more. When I give to charity they say I do so to ease my conscience; if I refuse they say I am a miser and they don’t want my money because it’s tainted. It’s a shame! What would these millions of working people do if it were not for me? What would the Pit do? Why, I feed and clothe the nation and if it were not for me it would starve! Everybody should know that!” When he finished he was greatly excited.

"Yes, but father you are not right to-day. I am sorry I disturbed you."

"Not right!—not right! You, my son, don't think I am wrong?" he cried.

"No, not exactly; but, you have listened too much to the wild, deluded censuring of the Pit."

"It's my life's blood this monster wants—it will not stop until it gets it—we are not safe—there's hardly a place we can go—there's no one to trust; but, it will find me a fighter, still!" he cried, as his lean fist came down on the desk with a thud.

An anxious look crossed the younger man's face as he said: "Father, I came to speak about aerial contests, but I see you have no plans to offer. I came to speak about it and if the Flyers are to be rep—"

"Nothing," he interrupted. "I gave you the C. F. & D., and if it has not been a paying investment it is not my fault."

"It has. But all its earnings have been placed back into the business. The valuation of the stock has been increased; but at present I am a little handicapped for ready cash. This Meet without a resort to entertain judges, visitors and friends may reflect considerably on our respect. If we win it will pave the way for us to dispose of many warships. Every nation will have an army expert at the contest."

His father's eyes took on a far-away look—his mind ceased to think—enthusiasm died in his face—his nerves relaxed, nothing short of strong stimulants would revive his interest. Cleve became

disgusted with his effort: "Father, you are not right."

"You, too, believe I am mad," he muttered.

He closed the door leaving his father in the same old unsympathetic mood. In the hall he met Newman and his spirits arose as Newman agreed to influence the old man to the proposed proposition.

CHAPTER XX

THE INTERNATIONAL MEET

THE Winter merged into Spring, and the first of June, the day of the great Aviation Meet, had arrived. Newman had made good his word, and to use his own expression, "had fixed the old man up in apple pie order!"

Lord Summersouth had made occasional visits to the States during the Winter and had always been the guest of the Nortons'. Cleve had been as congenial as ever with Marion, but their marriage had been less spoken of or talked about. Preparation for the big event was the topic of the day. Mr. Newman had gone back to manage the C. F. & D. and couldn't attend the Meet; in fact, "he cared nothing for it," he said.

Cleve thought often of Humanity. He had not seen her since the night of the organ recital. Nell's disappearance was still a mystery; but the Englishman was ever looking for her, or used that as an excuse for coming over so often. Whether he still loved her he did not know.

The day came fresh and invigorating — with the weather that makes every one feel good and agreeable. It is contended by some, of authority or not, that the weather governs our feelings. When the sun shines and the day is bright and cheery we

naturally feel better than we do on a cold, bleak, dreary afternoon. A bright day brings smiles, a dark one makes us sad and miserable. If this be true, and is stated without affirming or denying the hypothesis, Grand Central was the happiest spot in the world on the day of the world-famed tournament.

It was a gala day; a day of blood, nerve and handiwork of man in combat. An air contest, to be fought in friendliness, but to be waged with the fierceness of war.

The Germans had the very ship that had surpassed Cleve in the last event and was still a dangerous looking antagonist. Lord Summersouth's craft was neat and trim, and impressed every one with its velocity. The French had an unusual one built on an old pattern that balanced well and winged the air like a huge bird. Italy, Russia, Spain and Japan, and other nations of minor importance were out mainly to be represented rather than entering seriously the contest to win.

It was a momentous occasion when the Shooting Eagle (Cleve's craft), winged its way into view. The sun's glistening rays fell upon its wonderful mechanism, turning the tide of thought and causing the teeming millions to yell in one grand chorus: "Three cheers for the 'red, white and blue.'"

The bands which had been playing the national airs of different nations now struck, "Yankee Doodle," "Hail to the Chief" and "The Star Spangled Banner." The "Bookies" went from even money to odds of two to one on the United States. The resorts increased the dispensing of

stimulants, and enthusiasts drank deeper and longer to the success of their respective ships. Some lost their better judgment and proclaimed, without hope, the virtues of crafts that were sure to be "also rans" in the final finish; but nevertheless, they stood their ground like heroes and died like gladiators in the betting arena.

Grand Central was a Clouddweller landing, but to-day its exclusion was open to all classes of humanity. The conglomerated mass jostled together friendly and good-naturedly. Women of the blond type smiled coquettishly at the dark foreigner. Flirtation after flirtation followed by a walk together on the marble promenade. It was like unto the beach where no formal introduction is necessary.

Money was bet equally among women as among men, and flowed almost as free as the stimulants dispensed at the resorts.

In the bleachers were the Pitdwellers, there they were more at home, as they were only considered dregs by the foam at the top of the social glass. This great class, composed of people with more or less artistic feelings, culture and refinement, were likewise jammed and elbowed by dull phlegmatic creatures of the same world.

At last the opportune hour came — all was in a state of expectancy — the pulse of the people moved faster — the huge magiphone called the different position of the ships and lined them for action. The contestors were to go to Aerial Roost, twenty miles away and return. All was in readiness — the bands ceased to play — the noise abated — the excitement lulled — the tremendous gong

sounded — the ships started — the bands resumed playing and a deafening roar went up from many throats.

The gorgeous colors, streaming banners and the wave of many pennant trophies made Grand Central look like a meadow of wild flowers bending to the balmy touch of gentle Summer zephyrs. The bands played "The Watch O'er the Rhine," as the German took the lead. The French were second, the Shooting Eagle third, Lord Summersouth fourth, and the smaller nations vied for fifth, sixth and seventh places. The Germans were vociferous, their representative had started well. The Frenchmen cheered lustily as the bands played "The Marseillaise." They seemed to be surprised that their ship made the showing it did and was satisfied with what was to them a victory over their expectations. The race shifted — the Shooting Eagle took second place — the bands played "The Stars and Stripes Forever" — the Americans yelled themselves hoarse.

The reflector (a powerful magnifying glass) revealed the order of landing at Aerial Roost. The glass was very strong and showed the eager excited faces of the contestants as if they were only a few yards away. The German, Shooting Eagle, French and English landed in the order named. The rest were out of the running — some had quit entirely while others flew playfully around and were enjoying the race as spectators. Now for the home stretch — the race resolved into a single-handed combat — the German still leading and the Eagle gaining. Betting in favor of the Eagle now dropped back to even money. At the five mile post

coming back the German was still in the lead. "Ten miles, the German leading by a length," cried the magniphone.

"Fifteen miles, the German leads," came the voice. Betting now went two for one on the German. No American money in sight. Then an excited woman, with flushed cheeks, stepped into the betting circle, and began to take all the "Bookies' " odds.

"Eighteen miles, the German leads," came the voice.

"Don't do it! You can't win!" pleaded a tall man who was following her.

She turned on him like a flash: "I'll wager my life in this race," she replied.

Greyhouse bit his lip and said no more.

And with many Bookies' paste-boards, representing large sums of money, in her hands, she rushed to the pier, cheering. Greyhouse followed mechanically, deep down in his heart, wishing the German would win. It was a mad fight—the Eagle gaining and widening her golden wings soared high into the sky. Only two miles remained. Then shooting down an incline plane with the speed of a rocket she passed the German with ease. She dashed gracefully by the goal and made what seemed a deadly contested finish a comical "walk-over."

A tremendous roar went up from the throats of many thousands—the championship of the air had been fought and won by an American—the International Aviators' Cup was now the property of the American Flyers'.

The Germans were disgruntled—what seemed

to be a "cinch" was turned into an overwhelming defeat. The trophy had been manfully wrested from their grasp.

As Cleve landed an excited crowd rushed to congratulate him — so far he had not been crowned with the laurels of victory. He was nervous and wished to avoid anything like an ovation. A battalion of soldiers had been wisely and timely provided, and, perhaps, prevented a nervous collapse.

Marion and her mother, Miss Delainey and the Windsthurs sisters had been chosen as a committee to present the Cup. They were gathered to make the presentation when the woman gambler broke through the patrol. She pressed on while the Norton crowd held their breath in wonderment. Marion had long dreamed of this opportunity to welcome her hero publicly. She wanted to proclaim him her King to the world. This was to be the happiest moment of her life. No wonder her face flushed — no wonder her eyes were aflame and a look of outraged feelings covered her features as this adventuress interrupted the proceedings. The shock was too great and she was borne away from the embarrassing position.

"I hail the greatest man in all the world," cried this woman, who was none other than Humanity, as she grasped Cleve's hand.

The blood surged to his face as he said: "I hardly know how to answer you."

With a small frown of disapproval, she said, laughingly, "I am surprised that a man of your ability cannot answer the simple question of a mere woman."

"Humanity, who are you? I have not seen you for so long a time," he said.

"Like a genius, you answer a question by asking one," she replied.

"You have not answered me," he said mildly.

"Neither have you answered me," she parleyed. "You needn't; great men don't talk — their deeds speak for themselves," she added.

"Are you sure?" he questioned, anxiously.

"Yes. Quite sure," she replied.

"Then, why not tell your real name? You seemed to be anxious to greet me."

"I see you still have a little ego," was her reply.

"No. I was just stating a reality," he contended.

"Then, you were conscious of me running to greet you, and —"

"And taking me by the hand," supplied he, and continued: "You are so different — yes, so different from other women, I really would like to know your name?"

"Honest?"

"Honest," he said, gathering a little hope.

"And you want to know?"

"Certainly."

With a smile, she said: "I am still Just Humanity, with the 'Just' prefixed. I was eager to congratulate you because you were my means to an end, sir. I was elated over my success. Don't flatter yourself, my dear inflated Clouddweller!" With this she ran quickly through the patrol and his eyes followed her and his face assumed an amused and bewildered expression.

During the delay an old man, whom Cleve

thought resembled Herr Binger, seized the opportunity to make a speech. The crowd thought he was to deliver an eulogy, but in this they were mistaken. He began a harangue that chilled their enthusiasm. "You spend millions to entertain," he cried, "while the people starve."

"To hell with the people," shouted Norton, his face red and angry. He elbowed his way through the press and ordered the programme to be continued.

"You say to hell with the people?" queried the speaker ruefully.

"You are out of your place. You are seeking advertisement. You can't make a demonstration here. You had better move on," replied Norton.

"But the people are starving," pleaded the old man.

"Whom do you term the people?" asked Norton, contemptuously.

"Those down there," he answered, pointing a lean forefinger toward the bleachers and the depths below.

"Who? The Pit! Those animals? They are wolves, hyenas —" he paused. "You fool!" he sneered. "We are the people. Enough of this damn foolishness! Take the looney away!"

The old man was led away, through much excitement, by two policemen, and Norton began addressing Cleve: "Our arrangement has been delayed. Marion has suffered greatly and is still in suspense."

Cleve began to apologize.

"Nonsense, Cleve," he returned. "The fault was none of yours. Marion thinks some woman

was the cause, but I saw nothing but an old crank advertising his pet theories. I'll inform the poor child."

The excitement lulled and the decision of the judges was forthcoming. As the complimentary speech was being delivered Marion handed Cleve the Cup. There was something in her face that he didn't like — he did not see the smile — there was no light in her eyes. He felt as though he had done her some wrong; but, perhaps it was the vision she was remembering! It had been fulfilled. Humanity had broken through the patrol — she had talked to him — the people were clammering and everything had come true! No wonder she was depressed — no wonder she looked sick of heart — no wonder her voice shook as she extended the Cup, saying: "I give you this — but, I feel that another should have done so."

Without giving him a chance to reply she turned to her father, saying: "I am ill. I must get away from here! I must go!"

CHAPTER XXI

CLEVE'S VISIT TO THE PIT

It had been a week or more since the Meet — Cleve was driving for exercise and for reasons hardly known to himself he steered the Shooting Eagle out of the sky and landed in the Pit.

He had broken the Clouddwellers' rule and had established a precedent — he had done what no man occupying his station in life would do.

Whether moved by intuition, curiosity or adventure he only answered the inclinations that came from within him — to see this world beneath, so far away, of which he had but the remotest conception — had been the desire of his life.

Immediately he was surrounded by a curious, ragged throng, who volunteered aid in case he needed their assistance. When he so courteously declined all offers they looked amazed — they were a little nonplussed to see one so civil from his world of "stone hearts."

"You see," said one of them, who appeared very loquacious, and introducing himself, "I am Sir Wilbro Dockins."

Cleve smiled, and the said Sir Wilbro continued: "There are many people here to-day. They are here because it is announced that the Pit will be fed at the mansion across the street. They are

preparing tables on the lawn now. It is a very unusual thing for some of the Pittwellers to eat with their feet under a table. Some of them have been here twenty-four hours, or since the announcement was made, in order to be the first. Their hunger has not been satisfied—they have been disappointed with places of distribution because the food was far short of the needs of the multitude.”

“You seem to be of good intelligence—of good address—why are you here? Why are you not at work?” asked Cleve.

“You don’t understand,” he answered sadly. “It’s the same old story. I was not always a beggar.”

“Drink?” Cleve questioned.

The said Sir Wilbro sneered: “I know you can’t understand. It is not drink. I never touch stimulants, and this kind I hope I never shall. I will not be a coward,” he continued, drawing his little stature to its full height, “and I’ll not drown my troubles in strong drink. Some years ago the Prohibitionists said ‘the liquor traffic was causing the poverty of the country. Destroy this evil and you will make the people prosperous—you will destroy want and make misery an impossibility.’ They swept the nation—they smashed the ‘red-eyed monster’ wherever it appeared. It was a wave, for the time, fatal to the business, and the cry of the unfed was just the same, but of course a poor devil becomes so tired of this ‘hell-on-earth’ that drink, dope or suicide is his only way of escape.”

“You are very interesting; but you have not told me why you are here,” Cleve responded.

"The syndicated stores," he answered. "They have made it impossible for the private store to exist. In the conquest for markets, to dispose of their surplus, the manufacture has systematically eliminated beyond a possibility the existence of the small merchant. The system that created Clevendor and Norton made me what I am, and also, this hungry mass of human misery here."

"Then you blame this condition to greedy, selfish men?" Cleve asked.

"No. Not exactly. Human nature is the same in all stations of life. In the distribution of food to-day you will see the strong crowd out the weak—they will fight among themselves for the choice portions. In this degraded state you would think there was some fellow feeling—some brotherly love—but they will forget and fight like so many animals. They are not intellectual enough to work in a movement to better their condition. So there you are," he replied.

"Mankind is naturally inclined toward good," he went on, "or else man would have never developed out of the savage state. You may ask me why does the strong not divide with the weak to-day? It looks like selfishness, but it is not. The stronger ones know, should they divide, it would only be a question of time when they would be in the same condition. This is self evident—the same law the world over. Clevendor knows if he were to become a philanthropist and give his vast holdings to the poor, it would be a question of time till he would be down in this abyss fighting for preservation like the rest of us.

"The person who is to feed the mob," he con-

tinued, "may be foolish or a sentimental dreamer, and does not understand the solution of this perplexing problem. One meal only makes the pangs of hunger all the greater on the morrow; and, perhaps, prolongs the life of some who would have gone to that place, where they say there is no starvation."

At this juncture, large motor vans put in appearance and dumped their contents on the tables. A mad scramble followed, and Cleve saw his new friend vanish in the writhing mass. These loads were consumed as rapidly as others that followed, and he watched, glued to the spot. He saw in the faces of this mad mob, the tragedies of life. Nowhere before had he seen such a sight — no time before had he felt as he did. A lump came up in his throat — a mist in his eyes, and he tried to believe it was all a horrible nightmare.

They came and went, those dull, hollow-eyed looking nomads. They gorged themselves so greedily that they went away in stupors, grunting like so many animals, their nervous energy almost exhausted from paralytic shocks, caused by forcing food so hastily into their stomachs, which were in no way prepared to receive it. The crowds grew — the chain seemed to be endless, and as dusk deepened into night, around the lights, came new human moths to eat and flicker.

The Daily Labor, in the distance, began its evening editorial. Its words came as though a monster demon was speaking to them from the bowels of the earth:

"Few have done more for humanity — millions have done less. Some have lived in poetry and

song and some have been forgotten. A new friend to the poor has come. 'A friend in need makes a friend indeed.' Many good and generous souls have fed the poor before, but not to this extent. We can commend this deed and we rejoice that a new, wealthy heart has been touched. We curse a system of Government that makes the almsgiver. We despise a system of Government that creates the almstaker. When this generous soul has passed away and praises are still being sung by the living, the ever—the often—the endless—the eternal poor still live to suffer, and the system still lives to murder. Unless —" Here the voice died away in a mournful echo, leaving its piteous appeal in this sorrowful little street, called Murder's Row.

Cleve put his machine into action and shot into the sky. As he rounded the top of the marble mansion, he heard the rumbling sounds of Army Autos. He looked, and through the twilight he discerned the form of a woman standing on the balcony in the attitude of making a speech. He was sure it must be Humanity.

Long, red streaks marked the sky where the sun had appeared—the stars peeped out—the moon was round and full and rose higher and higher in the Heavens. Another day had gone and it had been an eventful one for him. He was unusually grave and he looked back into the little street and beheld the Autos charging the Pit-dwellers. On and on he flew, over Grand Central in his course to Hotel Marion. His eyes lingered for a moment on this colossal structure beneath him. Its marble steps illuminated with lights of many shades extended from the ground below to

the garden above and seemed to unite earth and sky. The building pyramided so high that the tower of Babel which the ancients regarded with awe and wonder would have been quite small in comparison. He thought, in an absent way, of the honor he had received on its pier a few days ago and of Marion's queer actions.

He wended onward, meeting aerial crafts loaded with people, who were all merriment. He was barely conscious of meeting them as he went on his way, brushing low roofs and steering skilfully around some wall of stone in his course. As he entered the ghostly shadows of the Daily Labor his blood almost ran cold. Guttural wails of despair came from the streets, where the people were demonstrative and the police trying to disperse any mobilization. Speakers were pulled, jerked from their rostrums, beaten, clubbed and jailed. When the mass became unmanageable Autos plowed, crushed and ground flesh to atoms.

A thousand thoughts surged back and forth in his mind. He wanted to get away from the sights and haunting sounds. He quickened his speed and soon landed on the hotel pier. Placing his Eagle in the care of keepers he entered and made his way to the Nortons' apartment. The wild strains of a rhapsody greeted his ears — Marion is at the piano, he thought. The door of the drawing-room stood ajar — he hesitated to summon courage. At last, nerved, he walked boldly in. Hardly on the inside the thought to turn back seized him. He had acted like a fool — he hadn't seen her since the Meet, and, too, how did he know if she would welcome him after that affair? The Englishman, or

Greyhouse, might be with her, he thought. A deep color mounted her face as she saw him approaching.

"Marion, I have —" he began.

"Don't," she interposed, resuming her music.

"Have you been invited?"

His face flushed at her words: "No — but — I want — ed to see you," he stammered.

"Can't you see I have purposely avoided you?" she asked.

"I demand a reason," he returned, almost savagely.

"Oh, to give you more time with — Well, I don't care to mention," she snapped back.

"You are unreasonable. Your insinuation is —"

"I made no insinuation," she replied curtly. "I state facts. I saw that woman — that virago at Grand Central with my own eyes."

"I thought you were stronger — I thought you understood that no woman could come between us. I didn't know you were jealous, Marion."

"It's a —" she restrained herself. "I am not. But she's not a lady. She resides in Murder's Row. Do ladies go there? No! No lady goes there I associate with," she said vindictively.

"You know her as well as I do. You know her pedigree. Who informed you?" he sneered.

"Mr. Greyhouse," she answered.

"And you let him come back," he spoke grimly.

"To get even —"

"Not jealous?" he innuendoed.

"No. I am not," came her retort.

"He knows her better than I," he answered cuttingly.

"He just knows her — or knows of her. He is not acquainted," she excused.

"He does, eh?" he scoffed. "And he dines with the lady in this very hotel? You disgust me."

"Thanks," she came back, sarcastically.

"And you jealous of her," he muttered. "I hardly know her. I caused her to win much money in the race, and she came to thank me. Greyhouse!" he uttered his name again, with a hard grin of contempt.

She wilted.

"Forgive," she sobbed. "I see through it now. But she was so eager to congratulate you, I couldn't stand it. Greyhouse has been acting his part. He has been here the whole of the afternoon and wouldn't give way to Lord Summersouth. I let Greyhouse stay because I thought you loved that woman. You will not see her again, will you?"

"Of course not," he answered, as she came down from her position to be his sweetheart again. "You still have the ring?" he continued, as he pressed her hand tenderly.

"Yes, and shall keep it always."

"You are the woman," he said affectionately.

She planted a tender caress on his cheek: "And nothing shall ever come between us."

"Nothing again," he repeated.

"It is too near — our wedding day," and her soft arms went around his neck.

"Wedding day!" he cried, freeing himself from her embrace. He felt a cold shudder pass up and down his spine. Those two words ran riot in his mind. He looked at the floor — he gazed

at her without seeing. He thought of the streets—O! those bloody streets—where chaos reigned. O! the mockery of life! How soon would it be until the slaves would break their chains! He had Newman's pessimism. He tried to explain, but could only utter incoherent sounds.

She tried to read his mind—her face turned pale. Surely, it hadn't come to this, she thought. It was this woman! She looked at him from the enraged depths of her eyes and said: "Go on with it. You are playing the double cross. I had no idea your relations with this woman—"

Her words stung him. He heard no more: "You think I'm a coward!" he defended. "I care nothing—why are you always putting her up to me?"

"Then, why so frightened at the mention of Wed—"

"Don't speak of it to me!" he cried madly.

"Why not?" she asked, acrimoniously, her eyes gleaming. "I don't understand."

"Great God!" came his heated words. "Have you not heard the cries of the starving? I wouldn't even if I loved beyond control make my wife a target for the bloody pike. No!! Never!!!"

With a look of disgust she said: "This settles our engagement. First, I thought it was that woman, now it's the Pit. However, I would suggest a few of the Pitdwellers out of the way would ameliorate conditions."

He fell back as if he had been struck a heavy blow—he was dazed and bewildered—had she hit him with a heavy stone she would not have stunned him more. The words she uttered so

freely he could hardly believe, or bear to think, and to hear them come from the women he intended marrying; and whom he thought would have some respect for his views and some sympathy, was beyond his comprehension. He decided he did not understand human nature—here was a girl whom he had known from childhood—had loved her enough to ask her to become his wife, and now he must admit that he didn't know her.

She openly advocated murder, and she was brutal! Didn't have lofty ideals—was not kind and had no sympathy and compassion. She had no nobleness of soul, and she was not the Marion his mind had pictured—she was cruel, cold and vindictive.

"I didn't mean it," she cried, seeing the effect of her words. "Please speak to me! Don't think me so heartless," she continued, throwing her arms about his neck again and burying her head upon his shoulder. "I was mad," she said, sobbing, as if her heart would break. "Mad to think of what had come between us. You know a woman will not stop at anything when the affections of the man she loves are in jeopardy. You tried me—you fretted me, and I have lived a life of torture since the affair at Grand Central. I can't forget—I may be jealous, as you say, but I can see that woman—she's a nightmare to me."

She became more calm and deliberately taking the ring from her finger she passed it to him. He stretched out his hand mechanically: "I can't, Marion," he murmured.

After all, perhaps he had been a little too severe and judged her wrongly. The scenes in the streets

had been trying on his nerves. However, had she seen what he had she would very likely not have spoken as she did. Surely, he could overlook this weakness — if weakness it be; none of us, he thought, were perfect. She was not superhuman. Her environment made her acquainted with more pleasant sights.

"No, Marion, I can't take it. It is yours forever," he answered, still holding her hand.

"Why?"

"I gave it."

"Only conditional," she suggested.

"But you consented," he replied.

"You would never marry," she reminded.

"If the trend of affairs continued," he explained.

"No woman, then?" she questioned.

"I promised," he answered smiling.

"I showed my temper and said some bad things," she reflected.

"Yes. And you astonished me."

"Mr. Greyhouse —"

"What of him?" he interrupted.

"Said the Pit would have to be removed before the country could be improved. And I thought that you believed that way," she explained.

"Emphatically, I do not. That's the commercial system's view."

"He said our fathers were of the same opinion."

"That may be true. I don't claim that they are infallible — all are subject to error. How can a man be clean when everything is so dirty?"

"Why! I have never heard you talk like this."

"No, Marion, I have just awakened — I feel as though it were my duty to join the Pit to-night.

When I saw those poor people mistreated by the police. It was hard to see those Autos grind the life out of them. It was terrible!" he cried, with some vengeance.

"Don't think about it — try to forget, for my sake," she replied sweetly.

He shook his head, and answered her slowly: "I can't forget. I must speak — it must out — it is imprinted so forcibly on my mind. I believe I'm a different person. It has created a feeling I can't throw off."

"Horrors! Are you losing your mind?" she cried piteously.

He looked at her with a sad smile in his handsome features: "No," he assured. "The doctors say when you lose your mind it is preceded by depressions. Nothing like it has come over me."

The lights shaded by red chandeliers cast a dull crimson glow on the sumptuous furnishings. They had seated themselves on a divan and were nestling close to each other. They talked on, unconscious of everything save themselves. Suddenly, as if by magic, the street below in front of the hotel was thrown into great confusion. They became very much alarmed as the reflectoroscope-phone brought the sounds and scenes to them.

"What can it mean?" she asked, grasping him by the arm.

"I fear it's the beginning of the bloodiest revolt that man has ever encountered!" he exclaimed.

"Are we safe?" she asked, as the machine registered the cries, howls and curses of the maddened mob.

"I am unable to say," he said, very much concerned.

"See! They are only making a demonstration. They don't seem to be making any attempt at violence," she said somewhat relieved.

The mob grew in numbers — instead of being boisterous it was quieter — the extreme rage of a moment ago reverted to silence. A large touring car made its way to the center of the mass — thousands pressed and jammed together in an effort to get near it. A woman arose, amid loud and vociferous cheering. Cleve's face flushed and Marion dared not look at him. The woman was Humanity and she steadied herself as the applause ceased, and her deep rich voice began:

"I am no stranger to you," she said. (Loud applause.) "I appreciate your respect. What I have is yours. If it relieves but a few souls, I feel I have done my duty (in a small way) to the suffering millions, and to that cause — the Brotherhood of Man." (A long demonstration.)

"I fed some of you to-day," she continued, "but it was not with my money: it was the Cloud's money. I won at Grand Central." (Laughter and cheering.) "I gave it back to you who produced it." (Prolonged cheering and a ripple of laughter.) "Did I not do the proper thing?" (Cries of "yes, yes.")

"It is remarkable, my friends," she went on, "what the time, the place and —" she smiled sweetly over the audience — "the girl will do. I, at one time, was a society favorite (thanks to Herr Binger)." (Loud cheering at the mention of his name.) "I lived in that inner-circle, which doubt-

less none of you have ever seen, or ever will see. To move within its confines you must own States and count your wage slaves by the tens of thousands. They regard you from up there as so many dumb brutes. For one of that company to put its dainty foot outside its golden border, or to have friends below the cloud-line, means ostracism. I went below that sky-margin. I ventured to see where the rain-drops fell. Imagine my surprise, when I found you with two walking-limbs instead of four, and hands and human faces. This was astonishing. The Bible had taught me that the mean would go below. I lived up there then," she said, looking upwards, "and I thought here was hades — if some of you object?" (Cries of "Go on! go on! You can't say anything worse than what has been said," came the greetings to her sally.)

"To you down here Heaven is up there; to those up there the "other place" is here. We have both places on earth to-day." (Much laughter.) She became more serious: "It is my desire to be here. It is love that brought me. Love for home — love for country, and love for all mankind. To those of you who cannot interpret my meaning, God pity you. To those who can, my prayer is God help you."

"I did not come here to make a speech," she went on, "I came here to ask you to do acts of violence. It is your enemies who wish you to do this. Give them no excuse to murder you. To those of you who defend the doctrine of force, who argue that freedom has always been gained that way, forget the ballot, and that the world is mov-

ing in different atmospheric thought. I am an advocate of a bloodless revolution. It is sane from a moral, a financial, or from any standpoint of human justice.

“If we win the control of the Government by the ballot, and are denied that right, then self-preservation is the first law of nature. If it shall be war, war it shall be; and war to the sword, and the sword to the hilt. I have lived that I —”

At this moment wild and frantic cries came from the terrorized thousands. The armored engines, hissing like death-dealing dragons from the gates of Hell, plowed into the defenceless mass. From the iron sides of life-destroying instruments, beneath the wheels oozed human gore like juice from a cider-press. In their murderous wake, bodies lay flattened on the pavement. Some crushed in head and shoulders; some through the middle, and others with their lower anatomy gone. But all, with life enough, writhed and twisted in their distorted agony. Cleve looked at Marion. Her face was achromatic. The street was darkened. From it came no scene, only the anguishing calls of the dying and the exhaust of the ponderous engines. “The Clouds cared not to witness their own foul exhibition,” he thought. Then he offered a mental prayer for Humanity's safety.

CHAPTER XXII

THE DEATH OF COLONEL CLEVENDOR

CLEVE'S mind was afire from what he had seen the night before — the injustice of the brutal assault — the inequalities and the utter hopelessness of it all — Marion's views and actions. A cry for justice reigned in him and made him as furious as a lion. He left the hotel to go to his father's home and tell him all. He found Norton there before him discussing this very topic. His father informed him that he and Mr. Norton "were speaking of generalities and he was relating the terrible assault by ruffians, thugs and cut-throats on the hotel, when the dragons prevented what might have been a hideous massacre of the inmates."

"Yes, this was the predicament," added Norton, looking uncertainly at Cleve. "That the ruffianism of this class makes us unsafe is self-evident. Why, they sang songs about you and all Clouddwellers. I was nearer the ground and could hear their vituperations. The speaker who addressed the mob was a woman, very beautiful of face and figure, but very criminal. She poured out gush and slush calculated to stir the baser element of man. I feared for my loved ones, and — for you, Cleve. I feared for you, Mr. Clevendor, here alone. There

were millions of them. I sent word to Greyhouse, and you know the rest.

Norton continued: "As I have said, Mr. Clevendor, I came to see you about putting down these brazen affronts. No free Government can long exist if these assassins congregate in its streets. They refute the divine right to own property, that land should be as free as the air. They vow such men as we are an impediment to progress. What have you to say, Cleve?" asked Norton, "sometimes young brains are good." He turned to Mr. Clevendor: "We must invite his opinions. He has become great since his victory with the C. F. & D. and his success at Grand Central."

"I have only regarded him as a boy as yet, you know," answered his father.

"Never thought much of his views?" Norton questioned.

"I admit it," agreed Mr. Clevendor; "an audience with most any one, I am ashamed to say, is very painful to me. I may be getting old, but I have cared very little for them. A conversation of few words can reach me better; however, as we have come to that stage of political affairs when longer interviews are necessary, and the wits of all, who are marked for execution are needed, Mr. Norton. This is the time that 'tries the souls of men.'"

"As you have dropped a bar (excuse the phrase) where I can mildly criticize," said Norton, "I will say you should have been more fatherly, and perhaps (I have no intention of hurting feelings) more civil."

"That I have admitted," returned Clevendor

again, "but my mannerisms should not now be the subject, if we are to save the country from revolution. The less we mince words the quicker we will put into operation a plan to perpetuate the Republic. If Cleve has an idea to advance I am ready to listen."

"We are ready to listen," repeated Norton, looking anxiously at him.

Cleve's fire had increased his steam above the capacity of his boiler and an explosion was inevitable. Norton, reputed for truth and veracity—father of Marion—had wilfully lied. He had respected him up till the Jackson affair. His father's partner, and in his father's home, had falsified. Should he shield him? Should he remain shut-mouth to this and other dastardly acts? No! his soul cried. His soul made him tell the truth, rather than wilfully refuting Norton's word.

"If you want me to state," he began slowly, "what I saw last night, I will begin by saying, what Mr. Norton has told you is a damn lie!"

Norton started, turned red and the steel grey of his eyes froze, chilled and gleamed a defiant rage. Colonel Clevendor trembled in the excitement and cried: "You see the reason! He's a— I want to say it! I am his father. He must apologize!"

"Not necessary," replied Norton, regaining his composure. "Our sympathies sometimes make us make some astonishing declarations. Shall I continue?" he asked, half questioningly and shooting a cutting glance at Cleve who was nervously holding the office table and breathing in quick succession as if he was almost choking with emotion.

"You are at liberty to explain my son's ungen-

tlemanly conduct," assured his father, "and why he passes such an insult."

"Marion says your son has been strangely drawn to a woman called Humanity. She has exceptional beauty and intelligence. She created a scandal at Grand Central. She broke the patrol and held a tete-a-tete with him. Ask him if he was not at Murder's Row the day the beasts were fed, and that was no longer than yesterday? You know the place. Shall I mention its political beliefs?"

"No," said the father looking sternly at his son.

"Ask him if the woman who met him at Grand Central was not the same woman that fed the Pit yesterday?" Norton went on. "Ask him if she was not the leader of the mob last night?"

"What have you to say to this?" asked his father. "Is this the truth?"

"Yes — but —" he faltered.

"Enough! Not another word!" exclaimed the Colonel angrily.

"I will speak," retorted Cleve stoutly. "If you are a just father you will grant the privilege."

"This I do not refuse, but you have no right to insult a gentleman in our home!"

"When there's one here, I'll be the last one to do it," he returned, looking at Norton.

Norton winced under the direct slap, and Mr. Clevendor relieved the situation by saying: "Mr. Norton is a gentleman."

"I was an eye-witness, too," Cleve shot back.

"Well, what did you see? Perhaps you can be a little more explicit."

"I was there, as Norton says. I had just gone into the hotel after witnessing, in the streets, what

I had never witnessed before. Marion and I exchanged greetings, when this so-called mob came. They were only making a demonstration and I judged they had left the main thoroughfares to carry out their programme in peace. This woman addressed them. I know nothing of her except that she spends time and money to uplift the Pit. She pointed out that a bad act reverted against them and not to indulge in it — to return good for evil. Then the dragons and the street became dark —”

“Gentlemen!” put in Norton, “I am very sorry I have been the cause of this; but Mr. Clevendor, I am not afraid to talk to you. I have always had great admiration for Cleve. I have looked forward to that day when I could take him by the hand and call him my son. But — now, that day can never be!”

“What!” shouted Clevendor. “You mean he is not good enough?”

“Oh, no, Mr. Clevendor, I meant no such allusion. He has virtually declared this engagement off. I will not say your son told an untruth; above all things I believe he would not. But —” he paused — “certain things sometimes blind us. I can forgive this rashness of youth. What he has said and done cannot hurt me; but, can Marion forgive and forget? Can she? It is her grief that pains me. You, Mr. Clevendor, have no natural right to let him ruin himself. It is not low blood, but he has felt the gifted designing influence of a creature who preaches death and destruction!”

With these words Norton moved toward the door. Cleve’s eyes followed him in disgust. His father

was in his dotage. He knew Norton would not stop at crime itself. After his exit it was a painful moment (it seemed hours) before his father spoke: "What is your defense, young man?"

"Nothing."

"What!" he demanded.

"Nothing further than what I have made," he replied.

"Your talk and acts both justify an apology to Mr. Norton, which you must make, or leave this house and never return, as my son, until you have," he declared.

"You wouldn't make me bow because I told the truth? Father, you are sane!"

"Will you do it?" his father cried, trembling, his eyes blazing, nostrils twitching and his lips the pallor of death, claspng the table with his nervous fingers and looking an outraged look at his son. Cleve remained silent. "Will you do it?" came the repeated words from an imbecile shadow. His father was in the omega — the evening of his life had come. Pity reached the depths of Cleve's heart. Suppose he should be suddenly hurled into eternity — he would go believing his son was a liar. What must he do? Cleve asked himself. Why not give in — in for his father's sake? No. He would make Norton the liar in his father's mind. The old man rallied from his nervous exhaustion and pulled himself together and demanded: "I dislike to drive you to obedience, but you can't live under my roof, you understand! and insult a gentleman."

"Give me time to explain."

"You admitted what Mr. Norton said —"

"Part of it," Cleve corrected.

"What of this engagement? What were your reasons? unless it was that woman."

"Stop! Father, you are carrying this too far."

"And no doubt 'tis a woman that would disgrace the name I have given you! The name I have tried to make stand for honor and —"

"Stop! Father, I know nothing of this woman!" Cleve interposed.

"You defend her!" he continued, "when she led a murderous band of cut-throats! And —"

"Father —"

"Don't father me! And you were in Murder's Row; you do not deny! A loathsome place for a gentleman!"

"She was at Grand Central! Showing that you were intimate!" he continued.

"She was," he replied, somewhat subdued.

"And tagging each other around at different places! You a son of a gentleman and she a questionable woman!"

"Stop! Father, even *you* must not say that! I know better!"

"Know better! Then *you* must be acquainted! It's an outrage to me, and an insult to Norton and an indecency to Marion. You would turn a good woman down for this unknown quantity. No doubt she is a woman that will place you beneath my dignity and respect! If you be my son, you must renounce this woman and apologize to those you have offended!"

"Take care! Father, you are the only man on earth whom I would allow to say such a thing; and even you must not force this insult!"

"Insult! You ingrate!" cried Clevendor.

“Have you fallen so low as to forget the stigma you have glued to a spotless name? Have your infamous dealings with this woman become so great that you are a moral pervert? Has all honor and sense of decency died in you? Must you feel insulted every time this ‘free-lover’ is censured? Have you no self-respect, or respect for me or your friends? Renounce her and promise never to see her again. Apologize for your deeds and I’ll —”

“If you insist upon my answer,” Cleve interrupted, “if you intend to take the C. F. & D. from me — if this is your final and crucial test — if you intend to drive me into the streets, where by nature, I am unfit to compete with the already over-production of wage workers — where my struggle for existence would be but short lived, knowing it to be absolutely suicidal, my answer is emphatically no. I will never apologize, for *I will go to the Pit first!*”

“You ingrate!” cried his father, tottering toward him with his fists clinched and raised in a striking position. He had advanced only a few steps when he fell headlong to the floor. The end had come, Cleve thought, as he bent over the prostrate form. He caught the sound of incoherent words as he tenderly removed him to his little bedroom. In there as he laid him down in his bed, his hands became cold and clammy, his chest heaved and breath came faster and faster, and before he could obtain medical aid, his body went into a rigor, he ebbed a sigh and was still. What he had expected was a reality — his father’s soul had passed into the land of spirits.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE FUNERAL

IT was all over, and all that was mortal of his father's body had been cremated, the ashes placed in a black metal urn, left in the open for the winds to blow to every nook and corner of the city. This had been his father's wish and had been carried out to the letter.

As in all cases the day had been trying. Friends had come to console and offer good cheer.

The light of the eventful day was slowly receding and a diffusion of night, dreary darkness fell once more over the turbulent city. In the twilight of what, otherwise, would have been a beautiful evening, he had sought the solitude of the aerial tower. Here he could watch the last star peep, and imagine he saw the last particle of his father's ashes wafted to the four ends of earth. Grave were his features; more intense, perhaps, were his thoughts. However, his face wore no expression of sadness or regret. To him death had no horror; it was only the inevitable, and he viewed it philosophically. To him death had no sting, the grave contained no victory. It was only a moment of intermission, a short rest, that permitted the soul of man to pass from the material to the spiritual world. The grave received and retained that

part, or substance, which could not float in that realm beyond the skies.

There had been no love between them, he thought, as he sat there in his loneliness; however, he regretted the last interview, the last scene, and felt some compunction of conscience, that he might have been the cause of hastening the untimely end.

Under the powerful searchlights he could see aerial boats passing to and fro, seeking sport and pleasure. Some were of gorgeous array and shone in the moonlight like birds of golden or silver plumage. Some had bodies as black as ink, with glaring lamp-like eyes and tails of fire that looked like creatures of prey. They shot across the sky with the speed of meteors and buried themselves in the utter darkness. The music from pleasure boats dinned in his ears and Grand Central in the distance looked like a pyramid of obscurity.

Down, from below, came the call of the wild and weary. Greyhouse had sent double patrol late in the day as the crowds grew in the streets around the place. Once a riot almost precipitated, consternation running to fever heat, by harangues from Pit orators, until a spirit of vengeance was manifested. The dragons again played their part and drove the nomads to subjection. Even this did not stop the cries of the many, as they shouted gleefully on what they termed the death of the "monster." This concerned Cleve, and he decided at all hazards to earn their respect.

Marion, her mother and father had come to see him. Norton, himself, showed no feeling of resentment and was willing to forgive and forget. This

morning visit was short and they anticipated to return in the evening. And he was not surprised when a craft landed and the Norton party came out of it. Besides them, there were Greyhouse and other ladies and gentlemen. Cleve could not understand why they should all come at this inopportune time, as he was gloomy and none of this primrose party could get much pleasure in talking to him.

Marion displayed her usual amount of feeling towards him, and had out-distanced the rest of the party to be the first to greet him. Cleve felt more at home with the C. F. & D. or some kind of sport than he did in parading in social functions where conversation usually runs on topics that were not to his liking. As yet, he had won no medals for bravery in it, and had felt no little timidity in the presence of those who lived and acted this life.

Marion intuitively read his mind, and said: "This is the night of Helen Windsthurs' debut (the youngest of the three sisters). It has been postponed on account of your misfortune, and the guests volunteered to come with us to show their sympathy."

He pressed her hand softly and looked earnestly down in her eyes as he replied: "Marion, if there is a time I need you, it is now."

A deep red mounted her cheek — her lustrous eyes softened, and beaming a smile, she answered: "You really are not 'kidding' me? However, it makes me so happy to hear you say it!"

"I am not," he returned laughingly.

"Humanity?" she asked anxiously.

"You should not bother about her," he assured.

"Remember you let me stand there at Grand Central."

"Didn't we settle this the other night? You know the circumstances."

"Noticed her," she pouted.

Further conversation of this nature was impossible. The rest of the party arrived, including U. S. Senators John L. Dawson and A. K. Clark, Rudolph James, of the Evening News, and their wives and daughters, and other lesser guests.

"We—I suppose I speak the sentiment of all," said Norton, glancing around before proceeding, "have come to pay our respects. Had we wanted entertainment, we would have gone to Temple Marion, where the Windsthurs are to prese—"

"Oh, no, father," put in Marion. "It has been postponed, and you remember why."

"Sure! How thoughtless of me. Well, we could have gone to Defry's and had a time," he corrected.

"I am glad you came," said Cleve, using a little diplomacy. "To look at this party one might think it was a political caucus."

"Call it what you wish, Mr. Clevendor," said Greyhouse, "we have come to say we will stand by you."

"Friends, I thank you, and feel grateful to the friends of my father and hope they will be his son's friends. You can have music and a dinner from Defry's, and Mr. Norton can still 'have his time,'" returned Cleve, changing to a half jocular strain.

"You will let us dance, too?" asked some of the ladies.

"You can have full sway — guests here can have what they wish," he replied.

Norton and Greyhouse walked away and when at a safe distance Greyhouse remarked: "A great scheme, Norton. I never would have believed he would do it."

"The only way," answered Norton. "You know as well as I do why this Windsthurs' reception was postponed. Old Henry lost the 'where-with' trying to keep his stocks afloat last week. The unstable market — the panicky times and not knowing what the fool Pit will do has eliminated him forever as a stock broker. Cleve thinks his father's death will end all of this and, also thinks, our happiness has been marred so he is planning this dinner."

"I understand the Daily Labor has an editorial on this death," said Greyhouse, branching a little from the subject.

"Just it. This feast will give them more fuel. It will hit *him* hard. He will strike back and perhaps declare war on the Editor. I understand they have a new Speaker, and will speak to-night. Do you know her?" he asked pointedly.

"Slightly," answered Greyhouse, coloring and growing nervous. "She calls herself Humanity, or — or that's what the Pit calls her."

"Cleve's in love with her, or whatever they call it. I'm talking plain, Greyhouse," said Norton.

"A bold game," put up Greyhouse weakly.

"Call it that — but I want this woman out of the way. You understand — you can turn the trick — you know her!"

"Yes — but — Marion will marry Cleve," he whined.

"You guess rightly."

"Where do I come in?" the Mayor pleaded.

"In that I'm not at all interested," returned Norton.

"Have I nothing to say about this?"

"You are not considered," Norton growled.

"Didn't I make you Mayor?"

"Yes —"

"And you have the nerve to ask to be my son-in-law," interrupted Norton.

"I'm staggered!" Greyhouse exclaimed.

"Can I depend on you?" asked Norton roughly.

"I am your slave, Norton!" sneered Greyhouse.

"Then, slave, serve your master!" Norton shot back.

They went to where the tables were fixed. All were seated — toasts offered and the music started. The feast was in full sway — the wine sparkled and all were making merry — and some dancing. Like unto Belshazzar's feast of debauchery the handwriting on the wall, came the roaring and thundering words from the mouths of the Daily Labor. While those big polished bell openings gleamed with unusual brightness no editorial speaker appeared.

"Dear Pitdwellers," it belched, "yesterday's death removed the great 'Monster!' We are not happy because of it, for the fangs of this great 'Robber' which were driven into your hearts are willed to his offspring, who will drive them still deeper. This young octopus, and other parasites, together with sycophants and henchmen are having

a festival of Belshazzar's debauchery while you starve!

"We fail to see how you will profit," the voice went on, "by this death. Only the Cloud's forces will be weakened; but the loss of any, or one sordid intellect of their cause ought to be a welcome to you poor devils who know no law but force. We cannot forget the creator of the 'black dragons.'

"We do not wish to go into the past career of this immoral life, because, we have no admiration for the beast that won out in the survival of the fittest. To him we can offer no crown of glory; but can only point out that the skulls of his many victims were but stepping-stones to his success, and the sobs of widows and orphans are yet fresh in our ears as we, in our own minds, picture him, a hideous monster without a heart. We notice him editorially as the biggest shark of them all and the mainstay that now props a tottering monarchy of profit, interest, greed and graft.

"We also note with pleasure the celebrations in the Pit to-day; but, we wish to again reiterate that you have gained nothing by this death. You are still the slaves of the system and the death of ten thousand men like this one will never sever the chains that bind you. Remember our motto: 'That our ballot is our sword — our law is love!'"

As the dismal echo of the voice died away Greyhouse sprang to his feet, and cried: "Outrageous! Outrageous! Are there no law, Senators —"

"By which this infernal voice can be closed?" interrupted Norton, his face heated with excitement.

“No law — no moral, by which we can close its mouth,” responded Dawson, the Senator addressed.

“If I were a Senator,” spoke Greyhouse, “I would do my part in putting every Pit mouth-piece under censorship. If this I could not do I would be in favor of shooting or destroying all of those who deny the divinity of the right to own private property. I would pledge my word, the Divine Ruler being my helper and witness!”

“You are too great to be a mere Mayor! You ought to be President.” exclaimed Norton, delighted, tightly grasping his slave’s hand.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE SIGNIFICANT CARD

It was a scared and frightened crowd that departed after the words of the Daily Labor. Cleve could not remember whether he shook hands with his friends or not, so great was the chaos. But of one thing he was sure, there was some hidden scheme on the part of Norton on bringing the politicians along.

He was quick to seize the opportunity of announcing Greyhouse for President. He must have known that the Daily would have something to say; yet, the editorial was graver than he expected. His face was flushed and the programme was cut short. James mumbled something inaudible. Even Greyhouse, that cool, gambler-looking gentleman shuddered after his over-anxious appeal for the Cloud's support.

The editorial sank like a dagger into Cleve's heart. He was not vindictive, but silent. He was marked by the Pit because he was the son of the deceased Octopus and that was all. Marion assumed courage to press his hand and to look earnestly into his eyes. Somehow, he wondered, if she was sincere. Whether, after all, she was but one more tool of her father's many?

No, he must not believe this; he must think her good and true. Oftentimes, if ever, it was difficult to distinguish between the good and the bad intent; therefore, he concluded it was just as hard for an earnest face to look into his and deliberately tell a lie. He decided to give her the benefit of the doubt. Some may be able to tell, he continued on in this line of thought, but he had not reached that intellectual development when he could peer through the frontal bone and see a contradiction of what appeared on the surface.

He did not have spirit eyes. He was still human, governed by the laws of flesh and blood. He knew Marion of the past, and the present, and these were the only standards by which he could measure her.

The city grew quiet as the hours dwindled past midnight. Aerial crafts became scarcer and inhabitants once more began to sleep. For Cleve this was impossible. He sat grim, with a thousand thoughts burning his mind. By nature he was an idealist; by environment a Monopolist. A Monopolist with nothing left to monopolize. The C. & N. Co., together with the C. F. & D., owned practically all of the nation. "Where would it end?" he thought, his mind confused.

Deep in this meditation, he did not notice a neat craft land, and a stylishly dressed woman approaching. She came with no uncertain step. The symmetrical grace of the girlish figure indicated good breeding and good looks before you had beheld her features. In this abstraction, his face in his hands, looking between the long fingers, downward, he was unaware of her presence until she laid a hand on his shoulder. He arose hurriedly

from his position, his fist clinched and in a striking attitude.

"You strike a woman!" she said, holding up her hand to ward off the blow. "However, it is only natural; a Clouddweller is no respecter of persons. Money is God; it is everything!"

"Humanity! Where! What! You here!" he cried.

"Yes," she answered.

"Glad!" he returned, regaining composure and offering his hand.

She drew back as if afraid: "You see I am alone," she said; "and as I am a woman who fights for the Pit, I am not considered by your class. It is best to remain at a conversational distance."

"Understand, now and forever, I consider it otherwise," he returned offended.

"You make me smile," she answered. "I would laugh if I were in the mood. It is ridiculous for you to talk to me like that. Why, man, do you know who I am? I am supposed to possess no soul! Believed to be more heartless than mere man. If it were known by those whom I have given my life to—" she paused; "Mr. Norton and your father have given me no little trouble!"

"I thought the 'Black Dragons' got you the other night," he returned.

"They gave me a 'race for the money,'" she answered smiling.

"Why did you speak in front of the hotel?" he asked.

"To be frank, I thought you would be there; and I wanted to reach you," she said seriously.

"Me?" he asked surprised.

"You!"

"Why should you have any interest in me?" he stated.

A painful expression crossed her face as she answered: "Then you, too, are already hardened. I am not sorry I spoke this evening for the Daily."

"You?" he asked fiercely.

"Yes," she came back emphatically.

"You said: 'I was an offspring and would drive fangs into hearts; or something like that!'" was his laconic reply.

"I did, and I have come to ask forgiveness. I thought the words might have cut you. Granting you are the son—but—" Her face grew white with rage: "I hate the system! And they who believe in it! I cannot help it! It is born in me, and has become my second nature."

"Forgiven!" he said gently.

She started to take his hand. He held back saying: "You being alone prevents this. Remember, young lady, you have no chaperon."

She smiled sweetly: "As you wish, Mr. Cloud-dweller. I see you are bound to be contrary; but some day you will be glad to do so. But—" she stopped—"I have come to talk to you. I wish to warn you."

"Thank you!" he returned bitterly.

"You doubt me?"

"Not exactly," he replied.

"Do you know I have risked much to come here?" she asked. "Do you know if it were known I were here I would be termed a traitress; and—and something awful would happen to me?"

"No! I didn't know as much!" he answered,

trying to keep back the myriad terrors that threatened to overwhelm him.

"A cold-blooded fact," she continued. "The Pit recognizes no friend outside its dirty life. And if I am discovered outside its sphere, I might as well bid friends good-bye, because I am sure to take a journey across the 'Stygian river.'"

He shuddered! He had laughed at her when she had told him something similar before! He began to argue, saying: "I saw you at the hotel, at Grand Central. Why not this diabolical pledge then? These places are certainly outside the Pit's realm."

"Then, I had not taken the Murder's thirty-second degree," she explained. "It is like Dante's 'Inferno': 'Lose all hope, ye who enter here.' I can never visit the Clouds again, except under penalty of death, if caught!"

"You have taken —" he exclaimed.

"Yes. I took the 'Guild of Blood,' the last and most fiendish of the Murder's exacting bonds of confederacy. I drank the gore of a murdered Clouddweller!" she replied.

"You have taken this hellish blood-drinking degree! Hounds of Satan!" he cried.

"Yes; and why not?" she asked.

"You mean to tell me you drunk the blood of a human being?"

She gave a little heartless laugh: "Tremble, you weak Clouddweller. I only drank some wine supposed to be the blood of our enemies."

"Sounds better," he said, heaving a sigh of relief.

"But —" she went on, "I came to inform you

that you and every one, directly and indirectly connected with the C. & N. interests, are marked. Do you get the trend of conversation? Mind you, and furthermore, those who are dependent or draw an income from this gigantic monopoly, are likewise marked."

"You," she continued, "the natural owner, by 'terms of law,' the Pit has figured put out-of-the-way, this holding would then become escheat; and become the property of all the people. The Pit believes this to avoid a revolution. I hate to think of this proposition, but the Pit knows nothing but cold-blooded business. Now," she went on, "I have tried to make you conscious of this, and by your actions you have led me to believe that you think I am painting the picture worse than it really is, but at the first smell of powder your defenders will run; they do not fight for love of it or for civil virtue, but because you and Norton feed them. If the Pit was in power there would be no army and navy. And at your and Norton's murder, the troops will join the Pit and will begin a carnage that the 'dark night of civilization' will not compare, unless checked by the moral elements of both classes."

"I thank you for this consideration," he said, "but I can't join the Pit, as you wish; the Cloud-dwellers would say something about this. No. I'm born under an unlucky star, and I am marked for execution either way I go."

Her face pained, as she answered him: "Perhaps, I think more of you than I should. Remember whatever happens I am still your friend. Here is a card which the Pit will respect; take it, and

some day it may come in very handy and you'll not regret I gave it to you."

With bowed head and a sorrowful face she returned to her ship. An impulse was strong in him to call her back and feel more of the force that she used in pulling him towards her and seemed inevitable as the law of gravitation. He wanted to be near her—to feel the inspiration her presence inspired. He wanted to look long and tenderly into the face he could love and respect.

While a retrospective view of conditions and a panoramic scene of future uncertainties for the time, blinded his senses, he was aroused from his reverie by the whirr of a motor, and again, the spice of her life, the ginger of her emotions had passed, possibly for the last time, from his presence!

CHAPTER XXV

THE INTERNATIONAL LINERS

CLEVE found himself on the landing of Grand Central's pier, late one afternoon, a few days following Humanity's mysterious visit. Grand Central was a landing for all the Trans-Continental Liners. A spectator could see and meet people from the four corners of the globe. Each nation was represented by a nomad of more or less respectability. Cleve stood to one side of the vast throng and watched the conglomerated mass of humanity as it surged in its wake.

The liners, loaded with passengers, came down looking like great pillows of clouds or demons of hurricanes as the color was perceptible. The nearer they came the bigger they were and looked as if the huge things of metal would cover the whole city. They came from every port and every nation and made a great disturbance as they landed. It was a beautiful sight and had always afforded him royal entertainment when in the city. He would slip away from his friends, take a seat near the docks, and would muse and ponder to his heart's content on the insignificance of the emigrants who had left the old world to seek their fortunes in the new.

The hissing and buzzing of the propellers made speech impossible and the force of the wind almost disturbed his equilibrium. Cleve moved to a safe distance and soon his attention was arrested by a party that seemed to be surrounding a woman. At first he thought they were of his society, but as they drew nearer their dress and manner indicated to the contrary. Suddenly he caught his breath and his heart seemed to leap to his throat. The outlines of the girlish figure he knew too well for it was none other than that of Humanity. As they advanced he walked boldly into the circle. His actions caused a commotion and Humanity, herself, looked at him in wonder. She surveyed him coolly and was quite a different person of a few nights before. Wishing to know the why of her refrigator's stares he purposely blocked her way as she made an effort to pass.

"Don't you know me?" he asked, as she tried to shun him.

"I can best answer for her," said one of the men of the party. "Can't you see this lady does not know or does not want to recognize you? You look like a gentleman but her actions forbid your further intrusion."

Cleve looked at the speaker. It was the same face that had visited him in the West. The same ugly scar proclaimed him Suddroff. He began to feel uneasy.

"I know him, Mr. Suddroff," she explained. "He's a nugatory pupil, and with a little learning may yet become a great benefactor. I would introduce him, but it would be of no consequence. He has acted with some temerity, and possibly

caused all some unnecessary embarrassment. I will say for his credit that he has a heart, but we and the Pit regard him as a monster. He is a Cloud-dweller!"

Suddroff's black eyes flashed and he saw gestures of hatred from all sides. Whether Suddroff recognized him, Cleve could not tell; but he would not have liked the idea of encountering him either in a physical or intellectual battle. Why Humanity would keep company with these people he could not understand.

"As you wish," said Suddroff, withdrawing his threatening advances. "If it is your desire I will let him go, otherwise, I will throw him headlong into the depths below."

"It is my wish," she replied.

As Suddroff desisted he still regarded Cleve as if he wished to carry out the ruling passion of his brain. He eyed him so closely that he could not meet his piercing gaze with ease or candor. This made him appear doubly guilty and as if some secret understanding existed between him and Humanity. She was placed in the position of playing the double cross. These people were catholic and lived in the world by laws that were exact and unbending.

Humanity was master of the situation — she read Suddroff's thoughts and began to speak: "If any of you doubt my sincerity to the cause let him speak so I may not continue under this wrong impression. I left a place where my fidelity was never questioned," she said, shooting a glance at Suddroff. "It was the upper-circle, where I was an equal. I left it for the blackest spot of the city

— Murder's Row. Here to begin the overthrow of the system—a system that makes nothing but rulers and slaves. I did it not because I wanted notoriety; if that was my aim I would have acted differently. I left the portals of its pearly gates to cast my lot with suffering humanity. If my acts are questioned, I have lived in vain, and my dream for the great human principle is but a sickly vision.”

This commotion had drawn the idle and curious. Cleve moved away in the opposite direction. The congestion became so complete that the principals narrowly averted being arrested. The police dispersed with the emphatic “move on.” He was conscious of the fact that he had caused this hubbub. To speak to her he had made a very foolish attempt. It was inopportuned, and to protect him and herself had caused her coldness. Why not, after all, dismiss the thoughts of her? She could never be anything more to him, because of where she lived and he could never go there.

He had not seen Marion since the night of the dinner. He had been pondering the great questions all the time and to-day had gone to Grand Central to see sights calculated to change his trend of thoughts for the while. And, too, his relations between himself and her father had been strained. Perhaps she didn't care for him now, but, Norton, by his actions, bore no malice towards him.

Of course their business should continue on the same way. But the mere trifle of money-making was of no interest to him. To find who Humanity was before she entered the Pit was paramount in his mind. He was certain she was a lady then and

now. It was noble in her to make this sacrifice to help others.

What if Marion were like her: what happiness! He chided at the comparison. The mockery! This could never be. The cries of the weak and miserable had never reached Marion's ears. Yea! he was lonesome, even while the crowds passed and repassed him.

He was marooned — isolated in his thoughts with a sea of faces about him. He dared not speak for aid or advice. In Humanity alone was the center of his aspirations and the goal of his happiness. The dream of his life! The way! But could he make this leap? Jump from the Clouds to the Pit! Must he? She had, and he would wager his life she was happy. Yes, happy in that place! Yet, was that evidence that he would be contented? Why not try it! He could never be near her any other way. Disguise — take an assumed name and follow her. Join the movement! These thoughts charged his being with new life. Every nerve vibrated with thrilling sensations. Electrified until his face shone with enthusiasm, he felt for the first time in his life the real joy of living.

But suppose she should not care for him after he had made this surrender! This was perplexing, should he fail in this attempt! But being near her would be worth the price. He would go — go to the Pit and live as the Pitdwellers lived!

CHAPTER XXVI

THE JAIL DELIVERY

SOME few weeks had elapsed since the incident at Grand Central and Cleve was still debating the probable journey into the Pit. He had remained in seclusion and even refused to appear in the photophone. He had been making preparations for the intended visit. He had let his beard grow and then had it trimmed Vandyke style. It, with his hair, was dyed rufous color and in this manner his disguise was so complete that he was astonished at himself.

Arranging the finishing touches of the make-up he slipped away by the secret passage with a grip full of gold certificates and made his way to the Continental Bank & Trust Co. Under the name of John Roberts he deposited the contents of the bag.

"Mr. Roberts," said the pale faced teller, recovering speech after counting the huge sum, "we feel honored to have you as one of our customers. I am sure our President, Mr. Evans, will be glad to meet you."

"I have just arrived," returned Cleve. "I came here to study sociological conditions."

Cleve observed that a small slender clerk had looked up from his work at his remark and was, without doubt, making hasty memoranda of their

conversation. Cleve was well acquainted with Evans, but he wished to make a test of his disguise. And as they went to the private office, our hero almost refused to enter as he saw Norton with the Bank's executive.

Mr. Jones, the teller, introduced him, and his incognito was complete. Both gentlemen asked him many questions concerning his study of this nature, and he left them as the hour grew late for the Pit.

As Cleve's feet touched the earth the Daily's evening edition began. He listened until he learned that Humanity would address the Pit in the Row. His heart beat faster — this was the place to which he was bound. A limousine was passing. He hailed it and gave instructions to go in all haste to Murder's Row. The driver looked as if he misunderstood. "The speaking! Murder's Row! Quick!" he explained.

The place was crowded, and Humanity was on the rostrum. An old gentleman whom he took to be Murd was directly in front of the speaker's stand. His hair was long and white and a pair of beady-black eyes gleamed from beneath the shaggy mass. Suddroff was on the right, his ugly scar looked repulsive and hideous, and his shoulders seemed to broaden as he sat beside the old man. This cicatrized condition of his face was his greatest asset. It kept him in good standing, and many times, when addressing, to supply emphasis, he would call attention to it with the remark: "This is what it cost me to be a Pitdweller."

Humanity spoke in a very refined way, and words seemed to enrapt him. She explained her great scheme to bring about its adoption. Her

proposition was for the Government to either buy all the property or go into the manufacturing of all the necessities of life at production prices.

Suddroff was the second speaker and arose in a manner that defied opposition and the law of authority. He began: "You may call me an anarchist! Let that be as it may. I favor no plan for the Pit to buy from the Clouds what is already their own." (Applause.) "While I have the utmost respect for our young lady friend" (more applause) "I feel, somehow, that she is only a woman and expects our dream to materialize like some 'Pink tea' affair."

"There is blood in Norton's eye," he continued. "He is a true successor to the Monster. He is every inch a criminal. Clevendor II has the same blood." (Prolonged applause, and Cleve shivered.) "To those of you who expect or wait for the rulers to have a remorse of conscience, I cannot offer words of encouragement. I have seen and felt their aversions. I have been ejected from their offices, and I would rather meet the devil, himself, face to face, and expect him to reform." (Vociferous applause.) "I see not the millennial dawn ushered in on the white wings of peace! I can only see the bat and vampire wings in the skies, and the streets of our cities stained in your blood, as I stand in the center of this battling stage of life's never-ending denouement!" (Wild applauses.)

"I have no patience with those of you who believe the lamb and the lion may lie down together without the lion being the gainer. Neither do I have any patience with you who expect to gain your freedom without fighting for it. If the thing

is not worth the fight we might as well give it up and acknowledge that we have been a pack of fools. We might as well go home to our dirty hovels and be contented with our portion of this Hell on Earth! I am not an orator," he went on, "I cannot tickle your ears with honeycombed phrases. I came to speak words I hope will burn in your minds and make you think. If you are seeking entertainment you might as well go, for it is likely that blood will be shed here to-night. I may say and do the very thing that may bring about this very condition.

He paused, surveyed with a fiendish and wicked gleam coming from his savage eyes. "Am I not right?" he shouted. No response. Murd twisted uneasily. Humanity lowered at him in disgust. "You are cowards! Nothing more!" he growled madly. "You want me to do all the fighting!"

"Police! Police!" greeted this remark, and instantly the place was in an uproar. Cleve sat still and watched the scene like a spectator. A burly Policeman reached the stage; Suddroff shoved him off. The people stampeded: Suddroff, Murd and Humanity alone made no effort to escape. "You are cowards!" he heard Suddroff shout. "Turn on these American Cossacks!"

In the chaos he was not heeded. A second policeman gained the rostrum; Suddroff struck him between the eyes and he fell like a stuck pig. The police circle closed upon the three leaders. Cleve managed to restrain himself until he saw Humanity roughly handled. He was now running frantically towards the melee; but before he reached it he saw Murd was pursued by a police-

man and as the old man turned to defend himself he heard simultaneous reports of automatics and both went to the floor. As he bent over the bleeding form of Murd his false flowing beard had left his face and he easily perceived the German features of Herr Binger. He reached the rostrum to find himself surrounded, but he fought manfully — but manfully to no avail. It suddenly occurred to him, "The sins of the father will be visited upon the son." . . . The laws his father had created to oppress the Pit were now being used upon his son. Cleve felt the stunning effects of blows from many clubs, and became dazed and sank to the floor. When he regained consciousness his environments were that of a jail or police-station. The grey sky through the barred windows told him it was the cold dawn of morning.

He was a bundle of aches and pains. He knew from the way his face felt it must be twice its normal size. Huge bumps adorned his head and as he pulled himself to a sitting position he felt a thousand knives severing his spinal column. The dry and parched feeling of his tongue and his mouth indicated fever. He could hear the tread of the regular watch. He managed to get near the heavy iron door and tried to attract the guard's attention. "Hey," he began, "would you give a fellow some water?"

"There's supposed to be running water in there," the guard replied and resumed his tramp-tramp.

"I want some water, and want it quick!" Cleve commanded.

"I'm no plumber," the Watch replied.

Cleve swore to himself if he ever got out he would do some reformation in regard to prison deportment. He was in the act of speaking to the guard again when a familiar voice from the cell next to his interrupted by saying: "My kind friend, what you say will do you no good. You will have to take what treatment they propose to give us."

"I have just been reminded of that fact," he answered.

"It will be best for you to remain as quiet as possible. I am sorry for you because of your plight. Last night you acted heroically but not wisely. Who ever you are, I think I have found a friend and supporter, whom it will be a pleasure to know and one who will earn a name for himself in the great coming battles of liberty. Whom may I have the pleasure of addressing?"

"The Adventurer," he replied.

"Quite romantic," she said. "However, I will not press my curiosity; but, I will venture that your last night's experience did not smack of either romance or pleasure?"

"No;" he answered sadly. "It was my beginning."

"I was aware of that," she returned. "I almost knew it. The stranger at our meetings is the one that is always caught. The police are after the leader and the unfamiliar go to their rescue; and the result is, he or they find themselves in jail with the speakers."

"Your surmise of my case is correct," he said; "but what do you suppose they will do with us?"

"That depends," she answered. "If we were

just ordinary bomb-throwers we would be locked up for disturbing the peace. But, since we are intelligent and have given the Clouds trouble it may mean a life imprisonment or even worse. You may be turned loose, but for Suddroff and myself I do not know.

"You see," she continued, trying to appear cheerful, "a policeman was killed last night. It was Murd's bullet that did the work; but, as he was also killed, Suddroff and I will be tried for the crime; and, perhaps, they will bring you in also."

Cleve shuddered. He trembled with fear and horror. He cared not for himself but for Humanity. "Is this your first arrest?" he inquired.

"It is," she answered.

Streaks of the early dawn streamed through the barred window. With them came an increased noise in the streets and many people were gathering around the building. From the location of adjacent structures he knew they were confined in the county jail. Resuming his conversation with Humanity he called attention to this fact.

"Yes," she replied ironically. "It takes a strong place to hold we murderers."

"What of the noise? and why so many people around?" he asked.

Just then the voice of the Daily cried: "Extra! Extra!"

"Listen," she cried, "I believe the Pit's uprising!"

The tremendous voice came in clear resonant tones: "To the people of the city; to the Cavemen, Pitdwellers, and to you who love liberty,

Listen! The Clevendor Aerial Works are now being destroyed by desperate and enraged mobs. The old Clevendor home, Norton's Aerialdome are but smouldering ruins. It is said that Cleve Clevendor and all servants in the old home have been murdered or lost their lives in the flames. Now, dear people, the last sovereign of that House is gone! Freedom is dawning! The cause of this display of vengeance was the storming of the Labor Hall last night. The veteran Murd murdered; and Humanity, Suddroff and another gentleman's arrest.

"The Pit claims," the voice went on, "that Clevendor created the 'Black Dragons.' While the Daily does not approve of the arrest of these individuals it does condemn lawlessness and murder." As the voice ceased Cleve heard faint sobs from Humanity's cell. He, too, was sad; but glad he had made the adventure, otherwise, he might have perished as the Daily depicted. A great lump came in his throat; tears trickled down his cheeks. Just why he cried he could not tell; but, many things that were dear to him were gone. The Eagle, his room in the old home; the Aerial landing and all were no more.

"I knew it! I warned him!" he heard Humanity sob. "He didn't believe me!"

"I judge you have heard some very sad news?" Cleve asked.

"I am sorry my emotions have disturbed you," she replied. "I suppose it was a foolish notion I wanted to gratify. I thought, perhaps, I might make a man out of a friend whom I have just learned is dead. There was no love of the sweet-

heart kind; only for the sake of humanity did I try to save him. His brain was most too small, I think; and what has happened is for the best."

Cleve fell back as if she had hit him; and it was a good thing for either of them that they could not see each others' faces. He vowed some day he, at least, would rise to her level.

"Wonder where Suddroff is?" he asked, wishing to change the subject.

"His cell is further down," she answered. "He was unruly and, of course, his punishment will be greater. I heard a noise from his cell a few times during the night and I knew some of the demons who were felled by his blows were seeking revenge. Poor old Suddroff has paid dearly."

Cleve withheld the many curses that surged to his trembling lips. "I guess it was good for me that I was unconscious before I was brought here, otherwise they would have to do the same thing to me."

"They knew you were no leader; but you put several of them down, and they brought you along to punish by imprisonment. I am to be doubly tried," she went on. "It is intimated that I have captured the heart of the young Octopus, and this young man was to marry the daughter of King Norton. I was accused of breaking up the match. All grew out of me congratulating him the day he won the International Cup. He caused me to win a great deal of money, that was all. I fed the starving with that money and, thereby, I gained more prominence. My flight in the political sky has been rather meteoric —"

"And no doubt," put in Cleve, "you will yet go

higher in the people's favor and in your works, too."

"Thank you," she said.

"I was at Grand Central on the day of the Meet," he continued, "and I also witnessed the jealousy of several women whom you did not mention; and I will say, further, you were the material cause that hastened the death of Clevendor I."

"Your knowledge of people in high places leads me to believe you are not a Pitdweller, and it is very remarkable that you are where you are; however, as you have said you were an adventurer, I can only judge by that you did not want to tell your real name. I know it is very natural for one not to have any human heart in this commercial age, and I know when a person wants to seek the Pit he or she must be in disguise. You are a seeker after sociological truths and I suppose that chance or destiny has brought us together."

"Your suppositions are quite right," he returned. "I am all you have described and more. I left the higher world to explore the underworld. It has been the dream of my youth to know what kind of creatures dwelt in these dark alleys. I had the desire, and the opportunity came yesterday. Last night found me in the Hall, and now you see what has happened to me."

"I agree with you," she laughed. "Your introduction has not been very pleasant; however, down here you receive your knowledge of social conditions by blows and prisons. You have started right."

Cleve was still suffering from the many blows. Humanity had not been hurt. Poor old Suddroff,

thought Cleve, had suffered enough, and had passed the night akin to torment. With the rays of light came a shift of guards. The second watchman, to them, was as bad as the first. Breakfast was served, but Cleve longed for an appetite. He felt as though he would never eat again; this sensual feeling lay dormant and very unresponsive. Had he more water he would have consumed it with his meal with great gulps.

Poor Humanity, he wondered if she fared the same. He truly felt sorry for her.

Cleve, after looking over the food and finding nothing he wanted, and consuming the one glass of water and cup of coffee, said: "Bring me some more water to drink and some to bathe my face and hands."

"I'm not a water-boy," growled the guard. "This is not a bathing establishment. If the water connection in your cell is out of commission, you'll have to make it the best you can. I'm not a Plumber or a water-boy."

Cleve suppressed his outraged feelings, but the desire was strong to clutch the beast's throat and choke him till his form was lifeless.

"Are there any other prisoners receiving this same treatment?" Cleve questioned.

"Sure. All Pitdwellers do," he replied.

Again his thoughts ran riot. He would gladly have given his life to kill him at one blow, provided, he would not make it worse for Humanity. "For the sake of a human principle," he cried, "man! beast! who, or whatever you are, bring me some more water!"

"I've followed my instructions," the watch replied and moved on to Humanity's cell.

"Youse sure a pretty woman," he said. "I would like to put my arms around youse."

"My God!" Cleve cried, as he heard the key in the lock of her cell door turn. Humanity screamed; he could stand it no longer. He rushed to the window and with all the voice he could muster he cried to the thick populace. His appeal was caught up by the reflectorscopephones and echoed up and down the great thoroughfares. High up into the air it re-echoed and revoiced until almost instantly the world knew what was about to take place in the barred prison.

Suddenly that ever vigilant voice began its belching words: "Friends," it began, "Humanity, the Joan of our movement, is now being sacrificed upon the altar of savagery! She is now being embraced by the fiendish defenders of this damnable system! In the name of God, in the name of justice, in her name! Go!—go to her aid!"

Cleve heard the door slam and Humanity's pathetic "Thank God! You have saved me!" The burly watch ran away.

The guards were now running up and down the hall in vain effort to escape. The cries of the people grew louder and louder, and he heard explosions and surmised that the jail defenders were bombing the Pitdwellers. The crowds grew larger and seemed to be ignorant of danger. They were bent on storming the jail. From his barred window he saw the people run, and immediately there followed a deafening report. A deep rumbling, as if from the bowels of the earth, seemed to

make the ground in front of the jail divide. Fragments of dirt and mortar and the rattle of fallen debris swept hissing through the hall. The huge walls seemed to vibrate and give way like some mighty Titan was being overcome by a stronger foe. In the moment of intermission Cleve thought he saw the form of Sir Wilbro Dockins directing a dynamite squad of Pitdwellers. His head was bandaged as if he had received a wound. In his hand he held a stick which he used as though it were a sword. His corps were pushing some huge instrument towards the Bastile. The crowd cheered their efforts. A second lull, then this terrible engine of destruction went off, followed by a deafening detonation and it in turn was succeeded by a thundering earthly roar. The stone flooring of the cells rose and fell like the deck of a Merchant Marine riding the angry waves. A monstrous seismic disturbance appeared to be taking place. The air came through the prison chambers like a raging tornado. Small particles beat the prisoners' faces with stinging effect. The fortress oscillated like a string in a gigantic piano, struck by a Titan musician, and the dampers failed to stop the doleful sound as it echoed and resounded over the city.

Prolonged applause from the people, and the guards were panic stricken in the halls and passages. The darkness and confusion cleared. The explosion had torn away the façade of the building.

"That must have been a powerful explosion," he heard Humanity say. "Everything is so light now since the front has been demolished."

"I thought so," said Cleve. "I can't see as

well from here. You had better stay close in to avoid flying bullets and bombs. These demons have placed some with time fuse, but I think these doors are strong enough to protect us."

Immediately a bomb burst, followed in quick succession by others. The air filled with dust and flying particles which beat against the doors. They had taken the precaution to lay flat on the floor, and they were not injured. The steel doors were now jarred from their fastenings and they were now at liberty. A torrent of bullets rained through the hall in defense of the attempt to rescue Humanity and other prisoners. The firing had partly ceased when she spoke: "I must go out and let the people see me. They want to know if I'm alive."

"A good idea," he returned. "There's little danger now; the guard's ammunition is exhausted, and I think we will have very little trouble in leaving."

"I am ready," she said, "but don't you think we had better see about Suddroff? We must not leave him here."

"That's true," he replied, "I'll try to find him. You say he is or was about four doors below?"

Humanity assented, and he ventured out and crawled to the fourth cell. He called to Suddroff; no response. He tried the door; it was locked. He peered through the opening and saw him on the floor. He identified him by the scar. He was not dead, but unconscious. His face was swollen, bruised and bloody. The guards had pounded him as she had said.

"Did you find him?" she asked when he returned.

"Yes —" he faltered.

"Dead?" she whimpered with tears in her eyes.

"No," he answered, "but beaten to a pulp."

Her cheeks were colorless and she suffered great pain. "The Clouds will pay for this in their own blood. The Pit must know this. Come! the people are calling us."

But on the outside they found that the "Black Dragons" maintained an aggressive front that nothing could move or intimidate.

"It's no use," he said, "this patrol makes escape impossible.

"See!" he continued, "they have already taken some prisoners. Look at that huddled circle; they look as though they had been or are inmates of this place."

"True," she responded.

All around were scattered bodies; the fruits of pestilent war. On both sides of the streets were piles of human forms ready to be cremated. Blood flowed in little rivulets to the ditches and gutters. It was a sickly sight, and Cleve turned a discouraged face to her, saying: "We had as well go back; it's all off."

CHAPTER XXVII

THE TRIAL

THE court room was crowded. People pushed and elbowed for places of advantage in the big hall of justice. Pioneers said the throng "was a record breaker." The furniture, the judge's desk and the bar appeared to frown in all its majestic supremacy at the belligerents who had so boldly outraged its sanctuary.

It had been proclaimed that the great labor leaders would be tried for murder.

People came either from morbid curiosity or deeply interested motives. It was a grave situation; a class battle pure and simple. The Clouds arrayed against the Pit. The Pit leaders refused to be represented at the bar; they had refused counsel on the grounds that they were convicted before being tried, and that the whole proceedings were a prearranged, concocted affair to railroad them to the electric chair. They even refused to take the stand in their own behalf; they said they were "innocent," and that the Clouds' justice was nothing less than a farce. A man of the Pit had been murdered on the same night but no case had been made of it.

The Daily Labor had openly declared that it was a "concerted scheme," and it was the intention of

Norton during the few hours the Pit stormed the jail, some few weeks ago, to put the Pit leaders out of the way before they could be rescued. To this the Pit had gotten wise and prevented his plans and now as a last resort they were to be tried. The heroes would go to the court and show their contempt by remaining silent. If they were declared guilty the Pit would rise in one grand unit of revolt and would pursue or be pursued to the damnable end of extermination.

A formidable patrol formed a barrier between the spectators and the court officials. Every precaution to prevent any possible attempt at rescue was made. The prisoners were held secure in a big steel cage in the room.

Some few days previous Cleve had been startled by the announcement that Greyhouse and Marion had been married secretly in the music room of the Hotel Marion. He almost doubted his existence; he aroused himself several times to see if he were not dreaming. The Evening News was telling the truth and the strangest part of it all was her parents did not object. They considered it all quite proper and were now making purchase for a handsome suite for their distinguished son-in-law. Cleve clinched his fists; he was fighting mad. He arose to go to the hotel and investigate, but the iron door of fate confronted him, and with a grim smile he returned and sat upon the edge of his bed.

Newman was right, after all, he mused. She did not love him; his money was all she was after. Now, that her father had obtained it by his supposed death she was free to marry whom she pleased. His father had made provision that in the

event of his death his property should be inherited by Norton. He knew this. Norton now controlled the courts and every power through which he could possibly regain his fortune, and Cleve now could see himself incarcerated in some madhouse for pretending to be the son and heir apparent to the throne. No! he could never do it now, he must wait for some other opportune time to strike!

As Cleve raised his heavy eyes he chanced to see Norton, Greyhouse and Marion entering the room from the secret passage. He knew his eyes flashed, and he could feel the situation growing more tense as they made their way and took seats just behind him. His face was still bruised beyond recognition. Humanity looked in their direction, but gave no visible sign of interest. Suddroff glanced, too, but his eyes resumed their cold stare as he encountered his arch enemy. He was still in a stupor, still stunned by the terrible infliction.

The judge nervously pulled a few papers from his desk and looking at the State's attorney, said: "I find the defense refuses to have counsel."

"Your Honor, you are right," replied the lawyer.

A deep hush fell upon the vast audience, only audible by sounds of the continual hubbub of excitement on the outside. Near the front were many Pit leaders and sympathizers, while directly behind the prisoners' cage were seated Senators Dawson, Clark and Mr. James and a number of prominent persons. These people composed and made up the Norton circle and seemed to regard the proceedings with some degree of uneasiness.

The first twelve men out of a special venire of five hundred had been examined and passed into

the jury box unchallenged. The clerk read the charge, "State vs. Humanity, Suddroff and John Roberts."

"Guilty, or not guilty?" queried the judge.

No response from the cage — they were silent — the judge grew agitated.

At this juncture, a towering, stately form arose and stood before the bar. "Your honor, sir," he began, "I offer my service as a lawyer and not as an official in behalf of these prisoners."

"Very well," replied the judge, "let the case begin."

Great cheering came from the audience. The voice of the Daily took up the echo and reiterated in words the scene before the court: "The case has begun," the voice cried, "and Mr. Greyhouse (the mayor and son-in-law of Norton) has offered himself to defend the prisoners without fee or compensation."

The judge faced the people and demanded order, saying: "I mean to try this case according to the law and evidence." (Hissing and cat-calls greeted the remark.) "The case shall begin," he repeated, surveying the assembly in an assumed attempt at defiance.

Greyhouse's action had to some extent stemmed the tide of sentiment and placed many bitter ones in a doubtful state as to the guilt or innocence. During the preliminaries he had sat with his knees crossed and maintained that stoical indifference characteristic of the man of affairs, and seemed to regard the whole thing as a melodramatic farce.

Cleve was perplexed beyond comprehension. He could see that Marion was vexed; even the

heavy scowl of Norton's showed to a great degree. The corps of distinguished men in the "golden circle" looked their chagrin. The Mayor sat still and determined; he looked as though, however, he was acting against the wishes of some outside force. Cleve's deep bitterness for him did not melt; he could not trust him, and a man without this element he could not consider. No call of justice prompted Greyhouse's move; he could not help but feel that some sinister motive was behind it.

The first witness to be questioned was a big burly Policeman.

"Your name?" asked the attorney.

"J. H. Johnson," the witness replied.

"What is your business?"

"Policeman," he said, as if proud of his job.

"Mr. Johnson, you were at a labor meeting on the night of June sixteenth in Murder's row?"

"I was."

"Did any disturbance happen that night?"

"Yes, sir."

"Tell the jury what kind of trouble it was."

"It was one of those Pitdweller's disturbances."

"Rough house," the prosecutor suggested.

"You can call it that."

"Do you know these prisoners?"

"I saw them there."

"You are sure?"

"Yes."

"Did a Policeman get killed that night?"

"Yes."

"You know he was killed there?"

"Sure."

"Was his name W. L. Jenkins?"

"It was."

"You know he was the man, and was killed in the meeting?"

"Yes."

"Do you know who killed him?"

"I do."

"Can you point out the murderer among these prisoners?"

"Sure I can."

Instantly all necks were craned and people stood up in their chairs and seats to get a glimpse of the famous prisoners, and to see which of the three the Policeman would designate as the guilty one.

"The woman called Humanity fired the shot, and these other two prisoners held Mr. Jenkins while he was murdered," came the direct words of the witness.

Cries of "Outrage! Black lies!" greeted the witness. Humanity stood and smiled her appreciation to the people. The crowd hissed and the judge rapped for order, exclaiming: "Another contempt of court and I will clear this room. You are here because I want to show the Pit that there is justice in my court and I am going to try this case according to the law and evidence."

The second and third witnesses testified word for word as the one who had preceded them. Greyhouse let them go, as he had the first, without a question. This finished the State's witnesses, and as the defense offered no witnesses or rebuttal testimony, the prosecuting attorney arose to argue before the jury. His plea was a butchered harangue of English purported to stir the feelings

of class hatred without a semblance of argument to the case.

As he resumed his seat Greyhouse's majestic form rose towering in its intellectual prestige and with that firm and defiant manner born of a leader, he began: "This, gentlemen of the jury, within itself is the most wantonly absurd case imaginable. It is lacking in all of its requirements; a manufactured case," he said. "The State has been forced to institute this not because the State believes that these prisoners are or were guilty, but because there's one man that wants them murdered. That's the reason, gentlemen of the jury. A Pitdweller was killed at this same meeting, and it has not been mentioned. No case has been made of it. Why? Because it was the Clouds' bullet that did the work — that's why it escaped their notice! Another thing that makes this case all the more absurd is, that you are all Clouddwellers to try poor Pit prisoners! Do you think there is any justice in that? Where is the precedent? The criterion? It's a farce! This and these prisoners are innocent. They are as innocent as new born babes. And you know it! Though, Pitdwellers they may be, that should not make any difference to reasonable men. It has never been proven that this woman or prisoners had pistols at that meeting. All the evidence you have is that this Policeman said she killed one of their number. Is not that enough to make any self-respecting person blush? To think these inhumans could be given credence or relied upon in this enlightened age is preposterous. A revolting thing and an insult to your intelligence. If you place capital punishment on these

prisoners, and they are murdered by this farce court, I can but see the inevitable. Some great indescribable something is certain to befall this nation. I am not — ”

A terrible explosion or some extraordinary fearful noise that sounded like the firing of many thousand cannons interrupted Greyhouse: “You hear it!” he cried.

In the jury box were twelve frightened faces; the audience cheered. The judge turned an anxious look to the crowded room and said: “Another demonstration like that and I will send my words on the points of bayonets.”

When the excitement subsided Greyhouse continued: “I hear the call; I hear the voice of the law — the court — the jury of last resort (the people). That voice says this woman and prisoners are innocent. What will this jury say?” — he paused, from the windows he could see the air was dense with dust and all could hear the rattle of some small fragments on the roof of the room. The huge place seemed to swing like a pendulum in a big clock. A deafening roar permeated the atmosphere and the Daily’s voice like a voice “crying in the wilderness” said: “A black shooting craft came out of the sky and dropped a bomb on the Hotel Marion and now this magnificent structure is a mass of smouldering ruins.”

“My mother!” Cleve heard Marion cry above the voice of the judge who demanded that the reflectorscopephone be closed.

Norton was now deeply affected. Dawson, James and Clark and others looked uneasily

towards an exit. Greyhouse maintained a cool indifference while Marion sobbed audibly.

"As the judge has ordered the reflectorscope-phone closed," said Greyhouse continuing, "gentlemen, who knows but that this same mysterious craft is at this moment hovering over this building ready to drop one or more of its destroying bombs the moment this jury convicts these prisoners?"

With these words he seated himself saying to the prosecution, "I have finished."

The attorney refused to answer or to rise from his seat. He seemed to be dazed and paralyzed. Cleve saw a mischievous smile pass over Humanity's face. The jurymen were eyeing each other uneasily. Greyhouse's suggestion that the court would be destroyed appeared to affect them beyond expression.

The Clouddweller judge was still determined to charge the jury, but the dull rumbling continuing outside seemed to strike terror to all. Officers, jurymen, court and audience adjourned in the most chaotic manner. The verdict was never rendered. Greyhouse went over to the cage and turned the lock and the prisoners were now free. Marion was overwhelmed with fear. Cleve remembered her vision and as her husband moved toward her he saw the powerful fist of Norton strike him full in the face. The Mayor went down groaning with agony. Marion uttered an ear-piercing scream and how her eyes fastened upon him as he felt Humanity's hand placed on his shoulder. He was conscious that she was leading him towards the door while Suddroff followed. No one had the nerve to molest them or stay their going.

“Come!” she said, her face all smiles, “they are afraid of the result. They know not what to do. Greyhouse could see it all. This unselfish action of his will be rewarded.”

Cleve was unable to answer and like Suddroff followed in mute silence.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE MYSTERIOUS KNIGHT

OUTSIDE a special car was provided for them; they climbed into it quickly. Suddroff was still in deep thought, and appeared as if the strain had been so much as to almost unbalance his reason. His every act was mechanical and without interest. Thousands greeted them as the Auto moved along the streets. A great army of Pitdwellers instantly formed and marched behind their car, yelling and giving vent to their glad feelings. It seemed to be understood that a great demonstration would take place in the Row.

This was the first time in many years that a huge procession had been allowed to proceed unmolested by the "Black Dragons." The reason, perhaps, was that the father of the city (Norton) was administering some kind of punishment to the Mayor. The vigils who had watched the Pit in good faith, and had performed their duty in every way, knew that there were some kind of row or fight on at headquarters. Now the vigils may watch in vain and tell what may be of good or of bad conduct on the part of the Pit, but to whom could they report? Greyhouse had defended the prisoners of the Pit! and while there was a disagreement at the city hall there would also be a jubilee in the Row.

At last the machine came to a standstill at Humanity's home. From here a number of strong editorials had come and it was the hub of all operations for the final overthrow of the Clouds' rule.

Cleve found himself lionized. He was proudly introduced to all the prominent leaders who rushed forward to greet them. A great sea of faces were before him and the cries of "Speech! Speech!" were heard from every side. He acknowledged their salutations with bows and smiles; but this mild recognition failed to satisfy the throng who had gathered to hear an account of the trial and the mysterious knight. Humanity stood on the back seat of the Auto as she had on former occasions, and said:

"Comrades, you have no idea how pleased I am to be with you again." The crowd cheered, and she continued: "They tried to make martyrs of us, but in their bloodthirsty scheme, Providence prevented." Cries of "You are right!" and a voice of powerful proportion said: "God indeed has saved our Queen." This brought forth renewed applauses and Humanity blushed and bowed in the direction of the speaker. "I suppose you are speaking figuratively and not literally," she answered. (More applause.)

"Kings and Queens, my comrades, belong not to our new brotherhood of man. I am glad to say we have reached a higher plane of civilization. We have reached a rung in the ladder from which we can now see the light. Kings and Queens belong to that period of darkness when beasts prowled in human forms and skins—to that age when men and women were 'red of fang and tooth.'"

(Laughter and wild applause.) "Norton," she went on, "belongs to that civilization, and so does every Clouddweller who believes in the present condition of things. In proof of what I say I wish to point out that they have gone to the jungles to get their intelligence to defend the principles they believe in. They have turned the enforcement of the law over to them, showing you where they wish to keep society to-day. They have imported thousands from the darkest nooks and corners of the world; have given them suffrage; they have promised them social equality, everything! if they will but help to perpetuate this beastly system." (Wild and prolonged cheering.)

She continued: "This system of Government is beastly, friends, because it is defended by beasts. If it had not been for the 'Mysterious Knight,' I might have suffered the excruciating ordeal of being embraced by one of the monsters." (Vociferous cheering and calls for the "Mysterious Knight.")

"The Mysterious Knight! The Mysterious Knight!" cried voices. "Tell us about him?"

"Comrades," she began, "this noble Knight is as much a mystery to me as he is to you. However, as he is here it would be more becoming for him to tell his own story, but, in the event he needs any recommendation, remember I stand sponsor for him." (Applause and calls for the Knight.) Humanity paused for the cheering to cease, then resumed: "My friends, presently the Mysterious Knight shall speak to you." Cleve blushed and groped for words that must come to him when he should speak.

“Fellow citizens,” she continued, “if I had lived in those old Roman days — and been as barbarous; if I had been with Cæsar when he thrice refused the crown from the politician Mark Anthony; and had I known the Mysterious Knight as I now know him, I would have said, ‘these are they who are even greater than Cæsar.’” (Applause and voices of approval.) “On June the 16th our noble friend proved himself to be a Cæsar, and now, my friends and co-workers, I take great pleasure in introducing your modern Cæsar who will also refuse to be crowned.” (Prolonged cheering.)

Cleve arose; a hush, the silence of death fell over the vast audience, and he noticed a dark scowl envelop the features of Suddroff. It was evident he was not pleased. While Humanity was speaking, and calls were emanating from the throng for Cleve, not one time did he hear his name mentioned. He had sat gloomily on the front seat looking at the people and the repeated cries for this man who was an unknown quantity made him feel all the more sullen. This man who had never been identified with the movement had been given an ovation; even Humanity had lauded him without one reference to him. His grey locks had succeeded the buoyancy of youth; he had grown feeble in mind and body. No wonder he envied this young man; no wonder every cry for him was but a dagger thrust deeper into his bleeding heart. Before Cleve could utter a word Suddroff aroused himself and began to talk. This action so astonished our hero that for the moment his wits were scattered and the sea of faces were but a blurred mass. His tongue clove to the roof of his mouth and the speech he

had corralled came not. His lips refused to work, his mouth was sealed and he could utter no sound. When he pulled himself together Suddroff was saying:

"Comrades, you are wrong." A storm of hisses greeted him. "You hiss!" he continued, "you scaly reptiles! You geese! You hiss because of your malignity and simplicity. You know not what you do," he cried amid jeers and hisses. "Such as you crucified the Savior!" ("Sit down! Sit down!" came from all sides, but he didn't heed them and went on): "You call for this person as if you thought he were made of Pittdweller clay and belonged to your class. You simpletons! He's a Clouddweller — an exploiter — he's a spy, hired by Norton!"

"Proof! Proof!" demanded the crowd.

"Proof! you cry," challenged Suddroff.

"I can prove every word," he answered defiantly.

"We believe Humanity; she says he's all right," shouted a voice.

"Humanity! Who is this woman? She may be a spy as well!" (Cries of shame! shame!) "She came to the Pit with millions of exploited dollars; she has been a Pittdweller —" (A voice interrupted him: "What's the matter, old man? Are you, too, jealous?") A volley of laughter followed this remark and the voice went on: "We still believe Humanity and will take her word."

Humanity arose and looked over the audience and encountered Suddroff with a look that made him cower. He sat down and gazed at Cleve with

malice and envy written in every line of his countenance.

"Friends," she said, "I am glad of your confidence. I hope you will never rue this day because of it. Suddroff proves by his rashness that he is not the leader of our cause—the greatest cause since the days of Christ. I, for one, am ashamed that he would use his power to prejudice you against a noble person. And as for his allusions to me, it is for you to say whether I have kept the faith." (Cheers and cries, "You have!")

"I, for one," she continued, "regret that the movement is so narrow, or composed of men so narrow, that all cannot be leaders." (Applause.) "I would rather be a follower in the ranks, yea! I would prefer to be an humble private, free to take to the 'tall timber' at the first smell of powder, and perhaps save my life than be a leader marked for execution. I would rather be of the masses with an honest record, than to be of the first, a prisoner, marching between a defile of soldiers to my fatal doom." (Applause.) "Friends, there is much truth in the old saying, 'Heavy is the head that wears a crown.' That is one of the reasons I refused to be made a Queen a moment ago; even, if a friend did say I was worthy, I simply deny it." (Laughter and applause.)

While Humanity spoke, Suddroff remained quiet, awaiting an opportunity. After she had exhausted a flowery laudation of Cleve's bravery at the jail and his action on the night of June 16th, she paused. Suddroff arose again, looked appealingly at Humanity as the crowd began to jeer and cry, "Sit down!"

"My friends," she said, "I beg of you to restrain yourselves and listen to him. He looks on this movement as a parent does its child; he will behave and I believe he is sincere in what he is going to say, but, of course, a parent is sometimes jealous." (Cheers.) "Listen to his accusations, whether prompted by a spirit of good or not."

"You needn't be afraid," she said to Cleve as she sat down amid cheers. "I believe I am able to protect you." Suddroff surveyed the audience in cold contempt and shot daggers at Cleve.

"Comrades," he began, "I believe you are yet my friends." (Light ripple of applause.) "I know there are some of you who hate me; I can't blame you, it is natural. Some people always despise a successful man. Some even scorn their Creator because He made better men and women than they could ever hope to be. I will admit that I have done wrong in speaking of our own beautiful Humanity so uncomplimentary." (Cheers.) "I was prompted by a spirit of madness. Some of you say I was jealous; but you are wrong. My friends, our movement is about to be led by a person in the employment of Norton. I got mad. Wouldn't you? Now, don't get excited, that is what is about to happen and I give you my word that I will prove what I say. I was informed on the afternoon of June 16th, that this person, who has become a Mysterious person, and is known by the name of John Roberts, deposited several millions in one of the Clevendor-Norton banks. He was introduced to Norton and after receiving his instructions came directly to our meeting and put up a very hard fight for us. We understand no law but force and can't

realize that a man out in merely sociological study would do this. If he were poor I would say he fought for liberty; but he is rich and is using a ruse, and will betray us to the enemy. This information came from our spy-system, and we can't doubt it."

Cries from all sides rang out: "Kill the spy! Burn him! Suddroff is right! Get the traitor!" A spasmodic rush was made toward the car. Cleve knew the bloodthirsty passions of the mob and with Suddroff the leader, his life would be of but so many minutes. Humanity sprang to her feet.

"Gentlemen!" she cried, "I couldn't believe that you are so criminal! Take the life of one who has come from above to make you as free as himself! Comrades —"

"A spy!" interrupted a voice. "We know you are all right; we love you, but we can't let an impostor — Come on, boys, let's make short work of the wretch!"

"The first brute that puts his hand on him will have to kill me!" she cried, taking a position in front of Cleve. "Let him speak. This man will clear everything!"

The crowd fell back and Suddroff jumped up and shouted: "Come on, boys! Don't stop at what that woman says!"

The fire in Cleve's eyes glared in magnificent flame of self-protection. He bounded to his feet: grabbed Suddroff by the nape of the neck with his left hand and securely fastening the other in a convenient place just north of his thigh he pitched the old man headlong into the street. "There goes the biggest coward of the bunch!" he exclaimed.

“And the rest of you are not much better, otherwise you would not permit this system of Clouddweller robbery! I say you are cowards! On the night of the raid I was the only one to go to this kind-hearted girl’s rescue. But when several thousand to one you would murder to gratify the ambition of a cowardly leader! I thought you were liberal people, but I find that you care more for personal ambitions. You cry loud for the downfall of Clevendor-Norton & Co., and are yourselves ten times more criminal. You say it’s the system that makes you do this, but that’s the cry to excuse your baser natures.

“I am a Clouddweller,” he went on, “and ‘have the coin’ — lots of it. The babble of you blather-skites that I’m an employée of Norton’s gives me a sickly pain. A spy! How’s this,” he said, holding the black card Humanity had given him. “Does that look like it? when it is dated before June 16th!” he shouted, holding the card aloft amid vociferous cheering. “I am your New Knight, too, although somewhat mysterious, because I came from obscurity to the ‘limelight.’ I heard Humanity — she gave me the inspiration for which my soul cried. Gentlemen, I am honest, but not yet converted; I am free to admit I am ignorant, but where my knowledge falls short I bring millions to further the cause. Now, if you wish to destroy the opportunity of securing a new friend with a bag of gold carry out your dastardly intentions of a moment ago and you will have accomplished a commission for which Norton will shed tears of joy.” (Applause and cries of “We are satisfied.”)

Humanity's admiration increased; she saw in him a future leader. A man who could change a mob, crying for his blood, into cheers for his glory, was indeed great, she thought. Instantly she was by his side proclaiming his greatness, and with a small American flag waving above his sandy brow, and wild cheering from the vast throng, made a pretty close and fitting climax to the dramatic scene.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE PHOTO OF KARL —

CLEVE opened his eyes on a new day. The Daily was still echoing how it happened and what it all concerned. His picture, with Humanity's and Suddroff's, had been shown and were still being shown on thousands of electrical boards with gushing eulogies. Cleve was now before the world not as Mr. Clevendor, the richest man in all the world, but as John Roberts, a Pitdweller.

He rubbed his drowsy eyes as he beheld his surroundings with some degree of interest. He had been assigned to a sumptuous apartment. Although one thing was conspicuous for its absence, no servants had put in their appearance and there was no call bell in the room. He had become accustomed to waiting on himself while in prison, so he bounced out of bed and began making his toilet.

The evening before he wondered if the brilliant chamber would look so well by the light of day. However, dawn had found him enjoying even more the place. My that bed! he thought, it was so different from the hard prison one. When he retired for the night it seemed to unfold and he was conscious of entering the "land of nod" and traveling many sleepy miles across the dream-land sky before he reached slumber-land. He felt the vital-

izing influence of this deep sleep and the fresh air had stimulated him wonderfully. After his cold plunge, every nerve, every tissue and fiber thrilled in one perfect strain of melody.

Observing himself in the mirror, the dyed hair had made no perceptible change; had his imprisonment lasted longer, this may not have been the case. He was still the same self-seeking person. Yea! to be this person had cost him much — the woman destiny decreed should have been his wife. He wondered if he truly loved Marion? He now doubted it. Perhaps, if he had never met Humanity. He blushed as he thought of her. But, a friend of the viper — Greyhouse! What was there between them? Mistress! It was preposterous — it was a lie! But, she must explain her relations with him.

The huge mission clock told the hour was high noon — he began to hurry — and went straightway to the library; here he had bid Humanity “good night.” He entered; no one was in sight. He began to amuse himself by turning through a number of volumes of Greek Classics; but, before he had gone far his attention was arrested by a life-like painting looking down at him. It was so real it startled him. The small beadlike eyes appeared to regard him suspiciously, and he felt a little uncanny. It was the likeness of some great departed soul. The eyes, while piercing, were kind and sympathetic; the nose aquiline and Jewish. The dark hair and Vandyke beard, with patches of grey, showed the picture had been made in the prime of middle life. The blurred inscription below read: “Karl —, the enthroned hope of millions.”

"Karl — who?" he repeated reflectively; "who was he?" He could not call to mind a single reminder of this person. A writer, a musician, an orator, or what? He looked again at the picture and saw the heavy brow that fell straight over the eyes, shielding a massive brain — he looked into the face of a thinker, a student; but to what age and what great cause did he belong? The clothing looked the style of a century or more ago, still the general expression of face indicated knowledge far in advance of his day.

He concluded he was some famous Pittdweller writer whose name had not received a place in Clouddwellers' conversation. "A great soul, Mr. Roberts," spoke a voice that had always thrilled him. She had entered from a side door and noticed his critical observation of the painting.

"I wasn't aware I was enjoying your company," he replied.

"I should not have disturbed you," she answered.

"No apologies," he interposed. "I was trying to figure out this man."

She looked at him in that frank innocent way, saying: "Are you really serious, Mr. Roberts?"

"Yes, Miss —" he faltered.

"Humanity," she supplied.

"Well, Miss Humanity, I acknowledge my ignorance."

"What Christ gave to the world to make spiritually free," she replied, "this man gave to make politically free. The Savior dealt not in economics, but proposed a new system of morals — a more thorough understanding of man's relation to God. This man opposed or proposed a religion. He

cared not for personal or individual desires — I suppose I am boring you?" she asked looking earnestly into his face.

"No, I am interested," he answered.

"You must be sadly in need of this information. Think of making a sociological study and never having heard of this man," she laughed.

"I am willing to learn the A. B. C.'s of your wonderful philosophy," he said.

"You will learn," she encouraged.

"Depends on who teaches me," he ventured.

"Oh! does it?" she arched her eyebrows.

"When a pupil loves the teacher, it makes a great difference," he queried.

"Phrase it to read like, instead of love," she suggested.

"Should I secure you I would never change it," he fished.

"Stop! This is going a little too far. Two blonds could never agree. The proposition is perfectly hostile. I could see your red hair and whiskers in my dreams. Your eyes, I must admit, remind me of one who was dear to me. If it were not for them I would not waste one moment here talking to you."

"I'm glad of one redeeming feature," he answered. "May I ask you who they remind you of?"

"Remember," she replied, "questions are not asked concerning one's private life. The public and they who come here know the rules. This place is at the disposal of those who come and go. Of course, I have my private apartment and you have yours, which you may keep as long as you

desire. The rest room, where every game known is played, is free to all. No introductions are necessary here — we are all friends. In the discussion hall, where all questions pertaining to sociology are debated, you will find much matter that will help you in your study. In the music room where I give concerts, you are welcome — but, of course, no one is compelled to listen," she smiled.

"I don't believe there is any power that could keep me out of there when you play," he answered.

"Thank you," she said, making a nice little bow.

"This place is a regular charm — it's a fetich place," he continued. "I am sure I'll be loath to leave here. Where are the signs, fines for violation of your rules?"

She laughed: "When you came from your high position you thought you would find us all animals here. Signs and printed rules are for people who are not civilized yet!"

"I object!" he cried. "I'm no animal!"

"You were hit either hard or you are ashamed to admit the truth," she returned still laughing. "This place is free — free to be used as it is seen fit. If the guests are ill-bred enough to deface the walls and furniture, that is their business. While I gave it all to them I would not raise one finger in protest at its destruction. I see you marvel and don't understand. The people will not destroy what is their own. Now if I have hurt your feelings," she continued, changing in tone, "I ask you to forgive me?"

"Certainly," he answered.

"And you don't feel hurt?" she asked.

"No; not a bit," he replied.

"I am sorry," she said, turning to look at the painting.

"Why should you wish to do this?" he asked.

"To make you think," she answered, facing him. "You have a great thinking machine, but the gearing is sadly off. It is atrophied. Your speech in your own defense was wonderful; it raised you in my estimation. I thought I saw the personality of another; I thought I heard his voice! But —"

"Humanity!" he cried unable to restrain himself.

She turned her face from him.

"Humanity, do you!" he cried again, and started to take her in his arms and press her to his aching heart, but she quickly vanished.

CHAPTER XXX

CLEVE MEETS SIR WILBRO DOCKINS AGAIN

IT had been several long days since Cleve had seen Humanity in the library and he had explored every room in which the guests were free to roam without one sight of her. He was afraid to ask, but his interest got the better hand of his judgment and he addressed people whom he thought most likely to know. They could or would not tell him what he wanted to know.

He had noticed the little Scotchman about the place who seemed to usurp the title of a "know all." His clothing and general appearance was not that of the starving vagabond he had met before. So far he had avoided this busybody, but on this morning he decided to make his acquaintance again. It was his delight to be noticed, and was at his best in forming new friendships, or acting as the cynosure of the art or rest rooms. When a stranger darkened the door he was sure to be accosted by Sir Wilbro, and if nothing prevented he would be led to the bust of some departed leader. A highly colored history would be devolved upon the ears of the unsophisticated listener. An impression that a very intimate friendship existed between the deceased and the little fellow would be left, and the most distressing feature of his eloquent discourse

was, it never ceased so long as the visitor had a grain of patience.

Cleve could never forget the bewildered astonishment of the Scotchman's face the morning he permitted himself to be interviewed. He deliberately entered the library about the time he was sure the little fellow would be in waiting. Sir Wilbro was at his post of duty and made a dive to be the first to greet this famous man. In his eager desire he stumbled awkwardly and floundered profusely over obstacles that made such a noise that it took Cleve some minutes to realize that he was meeting Sir Wilbro instead of being incarcerated in the throes of some mad-house.

"I presume," he began, "that I have the honor of bowing before the greatest man of the age! Permit me to introduce myself, Mr. Roberts? I am Mr. Dockins — Sir Wilbro Dockins," he explained. "I was the first propagandist in the little city of Anderburg, and also the first man to carry the Harpoon across the Belgium frontier into despotic Russia. I was at the death bed of that great philosophical anarchist, Count Tolstoy. It was I who suggested the plans to the great mind who built this magnificent building. Listen! I know you will ask me concerning this great lady; I have heard —"

"You have heard what?" Cleve demanded, growing embarrassed because of his familiarity with his affairs, or that, perhaps, he was face to face with the shade of Cagliostro, the recognized "King of liars."

"She will not appear as long as you make inquiry," he continued.

"If that is true, my friend," said Cleve, "I'll make no further effort."

"You are a stranger in our midst and I will advise that you never speak of her in public," he went on.

"I will never do so again, Mr. Dockins," replied Cleve, thinking there might be some truth in his statement.

"The reason I have not instructed you is because I have been away on a mission for the lady."

"Your errand?" he asked more interested. This little fellow seemed to be possessed with an abnormal imagination. Whether he believed him without discount, Cleve could not determine; but, anyway, he might tell him much.

"You are in good standing," he said after some deliberation, "she and I have been to see the Mayor."

"The Mayor!" Cleve exclaimed, his face twitching with pain. "Impossible! You lie!"

"Nay, I lie not!" refuted the little fellow.

"Look here, fool!" spoke Cleve savagely, clutching the Scotchman's throat, "you call me a liar and I'll cut your wind off!"

"Don't speak so disrespectfully of our lady," he squeaked, as Cleve's fingers tickled his jugular vein.

"What right had she to go there? Did she go in disguise?" he demanded.

"Do you think she would go in any other way," replied Sir Wilbro, as Cleve loosened his hold. "This mission had nothing to do with the Pit or its people; I can ease your mind on that score." He spoke as if his respect for him had undergone

a toboggan slide and had reverted into cold indifference. Cleve noticed that he assumed more intelligence and less bombast as he proceeded: "I would rather have suffered my right hand to be severed than to have told you this."

Cleve grew sympathetic: "I give you my word, Sir Wilbro, this shall be confidential."

The Scotchman grasped his hand reverently and thanked him in his peculiar way, saying: "I regard you highly and wish to ingratiate myself by showing my intimacy with the great lady."

"I am very ignorant of the philosophy taught by this young lady," Cleve returned; "I consider myself fortunate in securing the acquaintance of one so near her."

Sir Wilbro bowed a complete captive to Cleve's flattery, feeling as though he had found one, at least, who could appreciate his own greatness.

"Do you know," he began, "some people can't conceive my importance. They can't distinguish me from an attendant. My contemporaries envy me; they realize their inferiority. Anthropologically they are failures, because their ancestors had no brains to transmit. Consequently, according to Ethnology it will take generations to produce offsprings who can understand my intelligence."

Cleve smiled at such wonderful display of egotism. "Accordingly, my dear sir, you are an individualist, but you shouldn't be so severe on your poorly endowed brother. If I understand your philosophy, it is to teach your insignificant fellow-man."

"That is the principle, Mr. Roberts, but it is useless; by nature they are unfit, and by environment

they are only creatures of circumstance. Why, as I associate with the great mind these creatures sink back into the dark abyss that awaits them."

"The 'survival of the fittest,'" said Cleve. "Why you stay in this atmosphere is beyond me. However, I am one of your creatures who have not seen the light; you can always regard me as one of your most willing and respectful pupils."

The Scotchman's skull could hardly hold Cleve's gush; think of this man recognizing his influence and wishing to be his pupil. This substantiated his dream—the dream of his life! He would yet demonstrate to the world his superiority. This was positive proof.

"Mr. Roberts," said Sir Wilbro, "I have a secret which I will tell you, and will be further proof of my greatness."

"I would be glad to know it," returned Cleve.

"It was I who manned the mysterious craft that destroyed the Hotel Marion and caused the court to render a verdict of 'not guilty' at your trial."

"You!"

"Yes, it was I."

"Does Humanity know this?"

"She does; it was her own craft I sailed. It was taken out of this very building the early dawn of the day of the trial, and the moment the Daily announced the case had begun, we shot into the city and dropped a few bombs. If you doubt me," he said looking toward to the door, "here comes the Great Mind herself. You can ask her."

He saw her coming into the room. She had not as yet seen them as she swept gracefully into the library.

His heart pumped the red blood faster, and at the same instant the organ of life appeared to be in his throat. His face was the shade of a rainbow and he began to tingle from head to foot. The very atmosphere about him was charged with some invisible force. It vibrated through his body, intoxicating his brain. The feeling was ephemeral. His bravery forsook him and he leaned heavily on the marble railing around the statue where he and the Scotchman had stopped to talk.

At length he found courage to speak and he wondered if the little fellow had noticed anything unusual about him. He was either too well bred, or else he was not cognizant of the situation. "I'll take your word for it, and about her visit to the Mayor I will not speak," said Cleve, "and I would like to expect of you the same."

Sir Wilbro nodded his assurance and moved away.

Cleve made no sign or effort to reply, but his eyes were glued to the girlish form before him.

CHAPTER XXXI

HE WORSHIPS AT HER SHRINE

CLEVE, for the moment, drunk the nectar of the situation, debating whether to approach her. He felt the timid unequalness to the occasion. His nerve had left him just when he needed it most of all. He did not feel natural; he still experienced a sense of weakness. It made him self-conscious and he imagined that he must appear awkward in her sight.

Yea! he longed to feel like he would feel in the presence of any other woman. The more he labored to gain this point of ease, the deeper he was aware of his humiliation. To be self-possessed was a great accomplishment and meant points in his favor.

Was it proper to force his presence when she had undoubtedly avoided him? To think of being her companion was incompatible—he was so inconspicuous and inconsequential—that her cleverness eclipsed him whenever they met.

That she was high was self-evident. If there were such a thing as rising to her standard of living and thinking, he, in the person of John Roberts would do it. As Cleve Clevendor, he was the arch-enemy. So in incognito he came; it was the only

way. In masquerade it was true, but he was not ashamed.

He could see the askant face, the beautiful profile, and the velvet-like condition of her skin. The dark auburn curls smothered her ears and fell in clusters. A taint of pink flushed her cheeks, and she became even more radiant as she continued the search for some recalcitrant volume.

Her superb figure, so symmetrical, was gowned in a tastily light rose color of empire princess variety. He thrilled; no wonder he dared to venture. As yet she had not seen him and had not seen his eager look. Summoning courage with a resolve he walked towards her. No visitors were around to witness a rebuff if he should meet one; then, too, "faint heart never won fair lady." This saying was rather prosaic but it stimulated his mind as it wavered between two opinions.

"Beg pardon!" he said. "Can I help you in any way?" He hardly recognized his voice as his own.

His offer of assistance occasioned no reply. He saw the pink in her cheeks deepen, and a queer feeling stealing, which he liked and disliked, in quick succession, the two sensations that were battling for supremacy within.

"How you startled me!" came her sweet even modulated tones.

"I hope my intrusion is not misunderstood," he continued. "You appeared to be searching for a lost book; please don't refuse my offer of help."

"And all this time without offering your aid?" she asked, her face still turned from him.

"I saw no serious exhibition of distress," he jus-

tified. "Only now and then a flutter of a vexed expression."

She turned her face to give a look of reproof.

"I mean—I saw no signal," he stoutly maintained, "one that would justify an advance. If my volunteered assistance is not welcome—is misunderstood—I pray you to accept my earnest supplication. I promise to never trespass the private sanctuary of your most high presence again. No! Never!"

"Your multitude of words, Mr. Roberts," she answered, softening in her attitude, "are unharmonious in an applicable justification of the situation. Your profuse apologies are incompatible with the fairness of the case. I am more concerned by your present actions than by your former. Your self-depreciation grieves me. I want it understood that I hold no position of loftiness. I live by the same irresistible compulsions that give all mortals life. I eat the same food and drink the same water. You have the same blood and brain; the same fluid to build and replenish the worn parts of this human machine. When I have consumed this electrical substance—life!—I simply die. The only difference between us is, I had the desire, the opportunity and the courage with it. I eat no ambrosia; it was not the meat that Cæsar ate that made him great, as the Roman senators thought, it was his taking advantage of his opportunities, that was all."

While the echo of these words died away, she vanished through the door by which she had entered the chamber, leaving him to gaze after her, amazed and bewildered.

CHAPTER XXXII

CLEVE BOOMED FOR U. S. SENATOR

IN the afternoon of the same day when Cleve entered the library he found Humanity there again still looking for the tardy volume.

She was dressed in an evening gown and the luxuriant curls almost hid the pink flush of her face, the color of face and arms harmonized perfectly with the dress she wore. She was indeed more beautiful than ever to him, he thought, as she drew herself to her full height in reaching for that book which was reclining peacefully on the top shelf of the bookcase. "My! if he could only change places with the volume," he mused, "he would surely fall at the first solicitation of those ivory arms. Yea! life would then be worth living; he liked the thrill again; the sensation again, and he had been amply paid for the journey here.

"Why return to the Clouds?" he asked himself; "to return meant to forfeit what he had already gained. And, furthermore, there was nothing now left for him there; Marion had betrayed his trust or had thought him dead in the course she had pursued. But she had married too soon!"

"No, he would not go back; he was now happy — even happier than he had been in all his life. He

was now contented as plain John Roberts. And furthermore he may soon have grave difficulty in re-establishing his identity."

He knew the aid that Norton had at his command; knew that he would use it to the bitter end. He could never prove himself against the forces of this crafty financier. Norton was now the monarch of wealth made so by his father's will; and to try to prove that he was the lawful heir meant either death or the insane asylum.

He could see "gunmen" on every corner, and death to the "squealer" or "trouble-maker" in this desperate method for gains. The "gangsters" in every clime and the murder car ever ready to pursue to extermination those who reveal information implicating the "higher ups."

He realized that he was helpless; he looked at the girlish figure who had not as yet discovered him. Yes, he had given it all to be near her, and she was more than worth the price. He had followed the cravings of his half-starved heart. He had only half dreamed it before; now it came like a glorious revelation.

Was it madness that crazed him to crush the sylphic form in his arms! Or was it just a plain understanding that he needed the substance that he had always been deprived? He did not know; but one thing, she was the consummation of all his joys.

He felt like rushing to her and falling on his knees and making a clean breast of it all; but what right had he to do so? Had she not spurned him? Surely, there was some reason that would excuse his action! She loved all the world but no individual. To force his attentions was selfishness.

What could he do? To be near her without speaking his mind was unbearable.

He must go away! He decided, at all hazards, he must try to prove he was not John Roberts. He was living a bold lie. His conscience was stinging him; he was not in sympathy with the Pit. He had nothing in common with It; his errand was not a sociological research, but a mission of love. Humanity was the magnet that had drawn him, and this she would not be long discovering.

He approached her with this intention.

"Good evening, Mr. Roberts," she greeted him, before he had time to speak, still hunting for the pesky missing book, without looking at him. "I am so glad to see you."

"How did you know it was I?" he asked trembling.

"I felt your thought waves," she answered, continuing her quest.

A look of hopelessness passed over his face indicative of his battle at self-control.

"Don't feel so blue over it," she sallied. "Cheer up and remember about that 'faint heart and fair lady' business."

"But you are no lady," he returned.

"What!" she asked with some warmth, but apparently more interested in her pursuit.

"No — no — no — Not that. You are more than a lady," he stammered. "Tell me why you always keep your face turned from me?"

"Because, you goose, it's a woman's privilege."

This joy of encouragement quivered his frame. He knew love and disdain authorized a woman this

right. He was excited and began: "Humanity — Humanity, do you mean it? Do you mean it?"

She was silent; her face was still turned away. "Look at me!" he exclaimed.

"I am afraid of you," she murmured. "You are not John Roberts — you dare not think of your real — you make me feel different — I even forget the cause when you come near. I felt you watching me and your strange force. Man! you have made me forget and you have a queer power which you are unable as yet to use."

He started to touch her hand when she cried: "Don't, Mr. Roberts, can't you see I am almost upset?"

"Humanity, can't you see I love you?"

"I know it — do you think I am blind?" she asked.

"Humanity, do you —?" he faltered; his words failed him.

"Why, yes, I certainly do," she said, her face flushed and beaming with smiles, "I love all mankind."

"That's not it," he returned half angrily. "I mean don't you love me enough to quit this business?"

"No," she answered, speaking slowly, "my love for you is only platonic while yours has a different meaning. It means marriage! A life of devotion within the narrow family circle, while the cause of the Pit extends to the end of the earth."

"Then, I can't stay; I must leave; it was my intention to go without telling you of my love. It was the departure I came to discuss."

"No, no, you must not go!" she replied sadly.

"You must stay; you must give your life and service to the cause. Your going would make me lonesome, and I cannot give you up!"

"Humanity!" he cried. "Do you mean it?"

"Yes, I mean exactly what I have said. Your going would make me very lonesome, because of your likeness to the only man I ever loved. Your ways, your manner, your hands and your eyes are his. I could love you if you had his hair and would shave your beard."

She had virtually said she loved him, but he suddenly remembered her visit to the Mayor. He had defended her; she had dined with him! Was she true? A second Marion! "One question on which I wish to be clear," he asked. "How about Greyhouse? Do you love him?"

She looked at him in intent silence, then she spoke slowly: "What makes you ask this, Mr. Roberts? He's a married man, you know; but, now, since you have asked me, I must say that I do. Both you and Suddroff and all the Pit owe him a debt of gratitude."

"I suppose so, if you want to look at it that way," he muttered.

Then Sir Wilbro put in an appearance and announced two visitors to see Humanity. She turned to Cleve saying: "You must go with me. I feel safer with you."

In the reception room they found the callers waiting. "My name is Norton," said the male visitor, "and this is my daughter, Mrs. Greyhouse (the wife of our Mayor). We wished to see you, but we prefer to talk to you alone," he continued, shooting a glance at Cleve.

"Mr. Roberts is my confidential secretary, and what you have to say will be regarded the same as if we were alone," she replied.

"Our business concerns you, but if you wish this gentleman to remain, I suppose he must," he returned with much emphasis.

"He will," spoke Humanity not easily intimidated by his manner or the billions behind him.

"I presume you are acquainted with my daughter's husband, Mr. Greyhouse?" he began.

"Slightly," she replied ironically.

"You dined with him at the hotel before it was destroyed?"

"Yes," she assured.

"He defended you in the trial and you have been to his office several times since?"

"You either have the information or you are a wonder at guessing," she returned, eyeing him closely.

"Well, my daughter desires that you stop seeing him."

"Certainly," she answered, "I would do almost anything to make Mr. Greyhouse happy."

"It is not his happiness so much as it is my daughter's," stated Norton with much gusto. "We have come, my dear madam, to inform you to discontinue your flirting with him. He's a Presidential possibility and the family's reputation is also at stake. We prefer that you cease, altogether, your attentions; you know he is a married man and you a spinster, that is, I presume you are single?"

"So far, sir, I am at liberty to do as I please and have no husband to protect or no parents to inform young ladies to cease their attentions to my

better half. I appreciate your information and am glad of your warning and will state now, that I am not after your daughter's pet. If this is all you have to say, I don't care to discuss it further; good day. Come, Mr. Roberts, these people pollute the air we breathe;" with these words they left, leaving the Nortons with the polite Mr. Dockins who entered as they were going out of the room.

They returned to the library; Cleve liked the place, because it was here she told him, indirectly, that she loved him. "I have some information for you, Mr. Roberts," she began, forgetting that Marion and her father were in the other room. "Your name is on the party ballot for U. S. Senator. I hope you will accept the nomination if you win."

"But — Miss — Humanity," he paused; it sounded peculiar to call her by such cognomen.

She quickly came to his rescue. "That's all right, just call me Humanity, omitting the prefix, Miss," she requested.

"I don't think I know enough about the philosophy," he objected.

"Oh, yes, you do," she urged; "anyway you are honest, and that is all that is necessary. The Pit will demand it. You will be easily nominated and you must make the campaign."

"What of Suddroff?" he asked.

"He's the man we want you to beat. In fact, you are the only one who can do it. I am afraid of him; he is dangerous and if this anarchist crowd should get hold of the reins of Government they would —"

"Then it's a question of defeating Suddroff?"
he put in.

"Yes, that's the paramount issue and I beg of
you to accept," she pleaded.

"I will, for your sake," he replied.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE ELECTION RETURNS

CLEVE had been nominated as Humanity predicted. He had defeated Suddroff by a handsome majority. To his surprise he developed into a wonderful speaker and he was in demand everywhere. This was his first experience and was as novel as it was real. He became popular with the people and swept the country like an avalanche.

The Pit was making great strides in all the states, and looked as though the standard bearer would be the first man in the land. "Humanity was afraid of this," thought Cleve. She was afraid that the party would win everything and Suddroff and his bunch in control the country would be seething in one bloody marsh. She was right; she was really the great woman of the hour. She wanted the Pit's dream ushered in without blood or noise.

Greyhouse was the standard bearer of the Clouds, in the convention the steam-roller had been promiscuously used, and he was nominated on the first ballot with the blaring trumpets and much ado that usually proclaims to the world that a great man has come forward to lead a great cause to victory.

The Mayor, without doubt, was the most formidable leader the Clouds could put up. His defense of the three labor leaders in the trial made him, in

a way, a friend to the Pit. With a solid Cloud vote and a sprinkling of Pit support he was most sure to be elected.

Dr. J. M. King, a very strong man and renowned writer, had been selected as the Pit's choice for President. He had been expelled from the faculty of the University of the Clouds as a dangerous radical; and had thenceforth made his home in the Pit and had given his talents to their cause.

All summer the battle raged and Cleve fought for the Pit like a veteran. He learned late in the campaign that Newman had been nominated on the same ticket in the West and was striking back with a vengeance that was sure to win. Newman was making a hard fight, whether from patriotic motives or from rancour against Norton, he did not know. It had been said that the old secretary opposed Norton when he increased the prices of the C. F. & D.'s products and turned that philanthropic concern into an oppressing and thieving institution. This rich Nabob had discharged him. Another story ran that he left the service of his own accord, as soon as he heard of Cleve's death, and had thrown himself with vim and vigor into the campaign in order to forget the ill fate of his former associate. Cleve knew their cause had been advanced but it was not a time to claim victory before the laurels had been safely stowed away and they were securely entrenched behind the walls of the Federal Government.

From the surface appearance the political situation was going to be a momentous struggle. Cleve was firm; he had acted from no personal standpoint of aggrandizement, but the one absorbing

purpose was to please Humanity, and Norton's villainy with the C. F. & D. helped him some in his fight for this purpose.

At last the dusk closed on the dawn of election; it was indeed a great day. They received the returns in the drawing-room of the public house. It was evident that the opposing forces were running "neck and neck." Suddroff was not mingling with the Pitdwellers; it had been whispered that he had joined the Clouds and was doing some underhanded work for them. Had he been nominated he would have been an easy tool in the hands of the interests.

"Yes, the poor fellow has quit us and has taken his anarchist bunch with him," said Humanity. "His underhanded work will no doubt defeat Mr. King and will possibly do others some damage. I am sorry we cannot make the order a party for justice, for the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man everywhere! That was Christ's mission here on earth," she reflected.

The audience showed its appreciation of her by a ripple of applause; then, the voice of the Daily Labor announced the returns. Thus far the Pit was leading by a small margin. "Owing to traitors in our ranks we will not defeat the Clouds' standard bearer. The returns indicate that Greyhouse will be President, but our party will have a lead in the Senate and an overwhelming majority in the House. John Roberts, the Mysterious Knight, has won by a safe margin; he will defeat Senator Dawson by a squeeze. Another glorious victory, dear people, is reported from the West; Mr. Newman, the old attorney for the C. & N. Co. and former secretary of the C. F. & D. Co., has been elected

to the Senate on the Pit's ticket. He has always been a Pitt dweller in principle, but did not break away from the ranks of the 'strong arm squad' until he heard of the cremation of his old friend and business associate, Clevendor II."

Cleve could not withstand the good news; he cheered the voice and his sudden outbreak startled the small assembly. Humanity looked at him in puzzled surprise. "By Newman's victory," he hastened to explain, "it means that the Government will take over the C. F. & D. Co."

The voice continued: "We owe our defeat in the Presidential race to Suddroff and his band of political grafters, who stabbed us in the back. With them it is rule or ruin."

The Daily had about stated the facts in the case, but the crowd sat up late watching for any change that might occur in the districts yet to report.

"Your success makes me so happy," said Humanity to Cleve. "I can hardly restrain my feelings."

"Be careful," he muttered. "You once told me that you loved a man who had passed into the great beyond. Don't arouse me again. I have tried to forget; you could never love John Roberts. While he is a good man in many ways he is not the kind you could love."

Humanity blushed at this reminder; her features were more beautiful. She turned to her companion saying: "Don't you think Mr. Roberts one of the grandest of men? Let me introduce you."

Cleve looked to see who could be the object of her remarks. He had an inkling of Humanity's beautiful associate from stray conversation over-

heard in the rest and art rooms. He was interested in no one in particular but Humanity and it had never dawned upon him that the lady companion was an old acquaintance of former days. He was dumbfounded when Humanity said: "Let me present to you Miss Jackson."

"I am glad to meet you, Mr. Roberts," Nell returned. "I have heard much of you, and I have been informed that you, like the most of us, were once upon a time a Clouddweller."

"Yes," he said, "and I congratulate Humanity in securing such a refined and intelligent lady as her companion. Really, I feel a personal interest in you already."

"Miss Jackson is not receiving the company of men whom she has known for only a few moments," said Humanity.

"But you will stand sponsor for me?" he asked, with a mischievous smile flickering across his bearded countenance.

"No; I would not recommend you," spoke Humanity quickly.

"And besides a stronger title than a U. S. Senator appeals to me," interrupted Nell.

He wondered if she still heard from the Lord or if she were only jesting. "I presume it's a lord that summers in the south?" he ventured.

She shot a deep direct look at him: "You're a wit, and you speak the name as though you might be intimate with him."

Humanity frowned her disapproval, but Cleve continued: "It was the talk of the Clouds a few months ago when a Miss Nell Jackson was engaged to Lord Summersouth of England."

"My God! Man, who are you?" she cried.

"John Roberts," he replied meekly.

"I thought I saw; I thought I heard the voice of an old friend. But I guess not," she explained, trying to peer through the red surface disguise.

Luckily his speech-making and open air discourses had made his voice discordant, rough and hoarse. Otherwise, he might have been discovered.

"You resemble an old friend so much," she continued, "and if we have never been friends before I am sure I have seen you often."

"Perhaps so," he replied; "but don't you think it time for us to retire?"

They agreed and as Humanity and Nell closed their door, they discussed and rediscussed the identity of the one said to be John Roberts.

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE SENATORIAL FIGHT

At last Cleve took his seat as a Senator from the Pit. Between times he had been busy studying parliamentary law in order to familiarize himself with the rules and usages of the Senate chamber. Humanity had given him much information which would assist him in holding his own in the floor encounters.

He was soon stamped as a leader; his initiative ability forged him to the front. He met Newman and formed a "strong arm squad," because the big fight was now on. The Pit having gained an overwhelming majority in the House and holding a greater number by five in the Upper House it looked as though legislation would be easy. The trouble was to prevent a majority report on the drafted bill to create Government ownership of the great C. F. & D. Co.

This Bill now had passed the Lower House by a handsome margin, but it promised to be a Senatorial fight to a finish. The most weighty and momentous battle in the annals of the American Congress was now being waged. Money flowed like water; if Pit Senators had been so inclined they could have secured enough to make their home in the Clouds forever afterwards. But they were

made of firmer clay; money was not their price. They had a higher ideal. Their aim was to make their Government good. They were patriots fighting for a more noble cause. Tainted money offered by the Clouds they shunned with contempt. The paramount question of the hour was the position the Government was about to assume.

The Bill had now passed to the third reading in the Upper House. There was much display of oratory on both sides and many cries of "Confiscation! Robbery! And you want to use the brutal power of the majority!" The Pit Senators retaliated: "Governments with Kings are good so long as the Kings are good! The C. F. & D. Co. was a good thing so long as it was a philanthropic concern and as long as young Clevendor owned it, but the moment it became an institution of Norton's it was a bad thing to exist in a free Government." But the Bill finally passed in the face of all opposition and was now ready for the President's signature.

The Clouds were elated; it had been rumored that the President would veto the Bill. Cleve, it is said, made the most stunning and able maiden address that had ever been delivered in the hall. Many press reports stated that his course would be emulated by patriots of following ages. The Bill was on the desk of the chief executive; the country was wondering. He received tons of mail pertaining to the measure, but whether it influenced him could not be learned, as he was kept under close surveillance by Norton and his gangsters.

At last the suspense was broken; the decision came — the President refuses to sign the Bill. The

Pit's Daily at Washington announced: "That at first Mr. Greyhouse favored the Bill, but after re-considering, he could only do the bidding of his dominating father-in-law."

Newman was mad; the old veteran had fire in his eyes. "It's all off," he said as Roberts approached him. "We can't pass the measure now under four years unless the Congress will force it over the veto by the two-thirds rule, but we can't hope to gain that majority in both houses. We can't do it for we are losing ground now. A few Pit Senators are ready to flop now."

"Yes, that's the state of affairs now," returned Cleve. "But we must reintroduce the measure and I will address the joint body on to-morrow."

"That's the course!" he exclaimed, his face brightening.

"I will address them and I will say something that was never heard on the floor of that august assembly."

"Mr. Roberts, I have heard that voice before and I have seen those eyes before. There's something in that face that knows no defeat. Why, boy (I call you boy because of a dear young pal of mine), you, like him, are a genius. (He died too soon.) And he could have made this country a Pitdwellers' commonwealth in a day."

"Thank you," said Cleve. "Hear me to-morrow and I will give the Clouds a scare they will never forget."

"Here's my hand, boy," returned Newman. "If it can be done, boy, you are the one to do it — for it's coming — coming as sure as fate!"

CHAPTER XXXV

THE REVELATION

EVERY Congressman attended the joint session. Every seat in the galleries were taken long before the House was called to order. It was learned that the Blond Knight would pay his respects to the President and to those who opposed the Bill. Norton, the President and wife were in the Presidential balcony. Marion was somewhat nervous and her eyes seemed to fasten on Cleve as he mounted the Speaker's stand.

He met her gaze unfalteringly; she smiled and he wondered if she knew — knew that she was once his erstwhile lover. Yea! did she recognize him? Surely she would cry out soon. He now wore wigs in place of his dyed hair and beard. He took his look away from Marion and began to look for Humanity.

Where was she? He surveyed the audience and found her so near that he had overlooked her. She nodded encouragement; and as he faced the galleries he discovered Summersouth with Nell. He confronted the assembly, and knew that in a few moments the whole world would be flashing the news he was about to divulge.

"Gentlemen of both Houses," he began, "I have not come here to-day to speak again on this vetoed

measure as many of you think. The merits and demerits have been the subject of long and tiresome debates. The Bill is a failure; not because it failed to become a law, but by the power of veto vested in your President." (Light applause. A voice, "He did right!")

"Yes, to those of you who think so," he returned. "But, gentlemen, I do not wish to lower the dignity of this place by going back two thousand years to get my language to let you know what I am talking about." (Laughter and cheers.)

He looked at Norton and noticed the deep heavy scowl. "In a short while, the country would be rid of that monster," he thought. The assembly was now silent. The atmosphere impressed every one that something startling would happen. People of the galleries looked into each other's faces with puzzled expressions. Greyhouse glanced at Norton and at Marion. She was now an achromatic and her eyes were glued on the speaker. With all the venom and hate he could muster Cleve looked at Norton and began:

"Excuse me, if I apparently branch from my subject. It may be a deviation, but it yet deals indirectly with the subject. Some few months ago we were aroused by what appeared to be, and which was, the most dastardly attack upon a woman in the garden of the Hotel Marion before that place was destroyed. It was declared that a young English Lord made that assault, which I will say was a black misrepresentation. This couple are now side by side within the confines of this chamber and only a few feet away!" (Cries of "Outrage! Outrage!")

"This goes to prove," he continued, "the kind of criminals who want to rule this nation." He glanced at Norton and all eyes followed in quick succession. The monarch of wealth was colorless; he looked beseechingly at Cleve. "Of course, dear people, you do not know that the man who made this attack was the man who had this bill vetoed!" ("Proof! Proof!" greeted this sentence.)

Norton looked defiance; Cleve could understand his bluff. He almost felt sorry for him now, or for Marion at least. Her intuition must have told her; she was spellbound. Greyhouse never quivered a muscle, still maintaining his wonderful stoical indifference. Cleve looked at Newman and received an approving smile; Humanity appeared as though she was ready for any change or course he might be pleased to take. Our hero paused, surveyed the place in silence again; the atmosphere was stifling with humidity. He now challenged and defied the opposition in every move of his face and in every curve of his body. "God knows I am telling the truth!" he shouted, amid a deafened roar of applause.

"There are those of you who came to be entertained," he continued, "and I hope you shall not be disappointed. My friends, I have not the vocabulary to express my aversion; neither have I a word that will express my dislike for certain Cloud leaders." (Wild applause mingled with a few hisses.)

"Hiss, you slimy vampires," (Laughter), "you carnivorous cannibals! You revel in your Cloud-dweller rights and wallow in the bins of authority; but I say the people should own and will own the

C. F. & D. Co., and the C. & N. Corporation will soon follow." (Applause from the Pit section and cries of "Confiscation" from the Clouds. The chamber was in an uproar.)

"You cry 'Confiscation!'" yelled Cleve above the bawls and squalls of the tumult. "No confiscation! I give the Consolidated Farm & Development Company to—" (Many calls of "Throw him out! — throw him out!") "You Clouddweller cowards are glued too tight to your seats to throw me out!" he yelled vehemently. "Go on! go on!" bellowed the galleries.

"Now I will give the C. —" (Tumultuous excitement and loud cries from the Cloud section: "The man's crazy — He's demented! Throw him out!")

"Not crazy — but sane!" he shot back, and I give the C. F. & D. Co. to the people!"

"Who are you?" shrilled a voice above the disorderly throng. "Is your name John Roberts?"

"No! I am not John Roberts! — Pit Senator and Soi-disant Sociologist, but Cleve Clevendor! The only son and rightful heir to the Clevendor estate!" he cried, pulling away his mask and throwing his disguise out over the startled heads of Legislators, amid wild and vociferous cheering.

"Proof! Proof!" he heard from a deep sonorous voice in the Presidential party. Norton had risen and was gesticulating wildly. "It's Cleve! It's Cleve!" screamed Marion — her eyes sent her suffering soul to him.

"Your daughter can ease your mind on that score: she can testify in my behalf," Cleve re-

turned, shooting a parting glance at the burly figure.

The joint session was in an uproar; pandemonium reigned. A woman, flushed with excitement, her face covered with tearful smiles, came bounding down the aisle and into his arms.

"Humanity," he exclaimed, "who are you?"

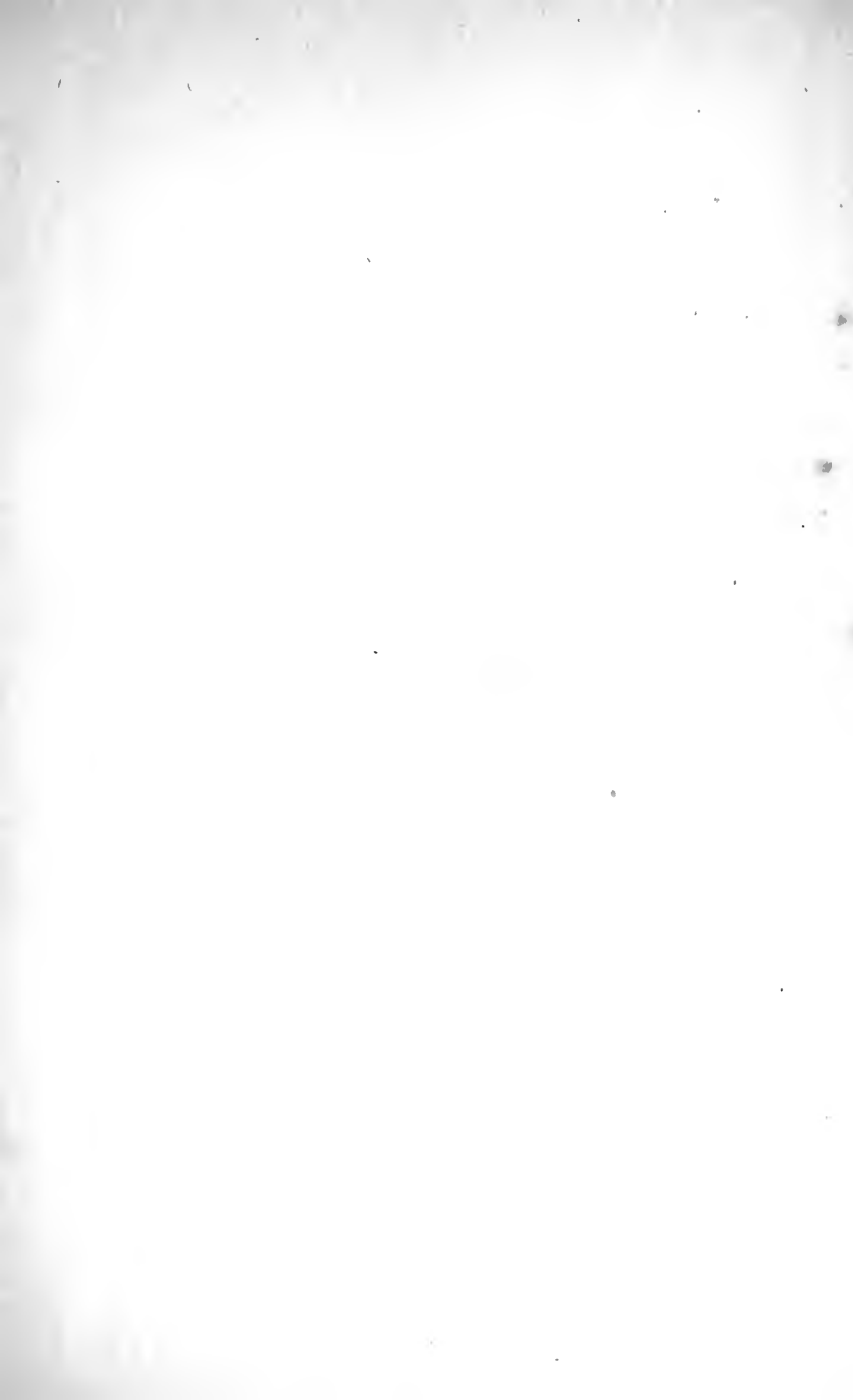
"Why, I am Genevieve Greyhouse — a sister to the President," she replied sweetly. "But — I have no name now, and as you have been so generous to give the Government back to the people, you ought to give me your name."

"I will," he cried. "It's the one thing I have desired. It has been the source of my existence and the goal of my ambition!"

He clasped her in his arms, walked to the edge of the rostrum and waited for silence. "Friends," he said, "you owe it all to this unselfish girl and the future Mrs. Cleve Clevendor!"

THE END.





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